

SHIVERS

Meet the Harlequin
from Hell in
THE FUNNY MAN

BEDLAM

Madhouse of
Mindbending
Murder

HAMMER

Has Risen From
The Grave

The Fright Films
of Robert
Hartford-Davis



**British
Horror
Issue**

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SHIVERS CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

According to the trade papers, *Bram Stoker's Dracula* was a major Box Office hit thanks to what they termed, insultingly so I must add, 'The Nerd Factor'. Basically that means you and me. We trooped off in our millions to see Coppola's redefinition of the undead myth because we were so intrigued by all the coverage it was given in the Fantasy/Horror press apparently. That's why, unusually for a Francis Ford film, the set was opened to rather less obvious magazines than *American Premiere*.

I mention this because *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* began shooting at Shepperton Studios on October 21st, 1993. However this time the set is barred to everyone (but I still expect *Premiere* to gain access) and I find this quite extraordinary. Does director Kenneth Branagh think his name alone will carry the film? Has star Robert De Niro insisted on this? (Quite frankly, as anyone knows who's ever tried to interview him, *De Niro* is a terrible interview. So who cares?) Have Tom Hulse, Aidan Quinn, John Cleeve, Ian Holm or Cherie Lunghi similar concerns about journo's watching them at work?

Realistically, as we've just had the Patrick Bergin TV *Frankenstein* (which was theatrically released in some parts of Europe anyway), I would have thought the Branagh Brigade would have wanted as much up-front publicity as possible since Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's story doesn't quite have the same chills cachet or scintillating erotic angle as Stoker's shocker. Or am I wrong? All eyes on the box-office figures this time next year.

Alan Jones

Rare stills No 4: *Fright 1971*



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SHAKE & QUAKE NEWS

EXORCIST 4

William Peter Blatty, the author and Oscar winning screenplay writer of *The Exorcist*, and his director of that watershed horror head-spinner, William Friedkin, are working together again on *Elsewhere*, a supernatural ghost story for Paramount. Blatty is refusing to discuss plot details at this early stage but the Paramount link-up is an easy one to explain: Friedkin is named to studio head Sherry Lansing. Since directing *Exorcist III*, Blatty has been working on a new theological thriller, *Divine*, and a comic novel *Demons Five*, *Exorcists* Nothing which he says poses the question, "How far, or low, will an artist go for a three picture deal?" The answer, coming from the man who also brought us *Darling Lili* and *The Ninth Configuration*, should be an interesting one even though Friedkin/Blatty authority Mark Kermode reckons he'll eat his entire Linda Blair photo collection if either becomes a reality.

CENSORSHIP WORLDWIDE

My Jyväskylä Arts Festival report last issue caused people to write in and ask about censorship in other countries. Is everywhere else as relaxed as Finland where they screen *The Exorcist* on network TV in a family time slot? Well, unsurprisingly, it seems James Fennell and our dearly beloved BBFC are the lone alien voices in Europe. Even the once highly monastic Sweden is adopting a more liberal censorship regime and making their rating system advisory not mandatory. It isn't an issue in Italy, France or Spain. A debate about TV violence is currently raging in Germany, as it is in America, but it hasn't affected the film industry there. In South East Asia anything goes with regards to violence. It's sex that's taboo in these parts. The Japanese are only now getting their first glimpses of public hair. Since the toppling of the communist regimes, Eastern Europe has



Left: Exclusive computer graphic FX shot from Chuck Russell's *The Mask*

gone berserk (The two most popular movies in Estonia since the new freedom? *Abba: The Movie* and *Deep Throat*). South

Africa's censorship system was modelled on Australia's earlier this year but the only totally banned movie remains *The*

Last Temptation of Christ

Courtness worse than Britain? The Philippines, Pakistan and Malaysia where *Trespass*, *Mobsters*, *Leap of Faith* and *Wayne's World* are banned on violence, sex, language and religious grounds.

WORLD HORROR ON TV

Here's some television shows/series/movies promoted at the recent MIPCOM market in Milan that may just make it to a network/satellite channel/video near you. *La Famille Twist* is a French *Masters of Horror*. *Prophet of Evil* concerns a French religious sect. *Dream Man* finds television touching German reality. *Vampire at Paradise* is a French comedy undead tale. *De Oro Puro* is a Spanish series devoted to recounting magical legends. *The Dollhouse Murders* is a British mystery. Look for the new American mini-series *Reincarnation* in Venice. *Fatal Connection* and *Jack in the Box*. *Passion* transcends death in *Of Body and Soul* from Britain. Italian hack Frank

Agrima has made a documentary on cannibalism titled *Cannibals*. *Lifepod* is an American TV movie about the passengers aboard a luxury spaceship struggling to survive an alien saboteur attack. The US also offers *Witch Academy* where the Devil and his disciple go on a non-stop sorcery house raid. A prehistoric woman is discovered in a bed of snow and her lover time travels into the future to save her from experimentation in the adult American TV movie *Ice Woman*. Horror and suspense is promised in both Dr Brown's *Chamber of Horrors* and *Return of Evil*. *Forever Knight* is a German action series about a 700 year-old vampire cop.

GERMAN UPDATE

As production winds down on Peter MacDonald's *The Never Ending Story III* (been there, done it, set report soon *Starburst* readers) here's what else is happening on the German fantasy front. Munich's Bavaria Studios is producing *Heaven or Bust* a Sci-Fi comedy starring Gertie Georg. Michael Gwisdek, one of the former East Germany's best known actors, steps behind the camera for the psycho-thriller *Abschied von Agnes/Pierling* from Agnes. Roland (Universal Soldier) Emmerich is the executive producer of another Sci-Fi comedy *The High Crusade* co-directed by Holger Matthies and Klaus Knebel. (Emmerich's own time travel extravaganzas, *Stargate*, where astronauts go through a Black Hole and discover the homeland of ancient Egyptian Gods, is set for August 94 release). Joe Steing directs a new version of the famous myth *Der Fliegende Holländer/The Flying Dutchman*. Karim Fallenstein and Peter Lohmeyer star in Robert Bramkamp's *Die Eroberung der Mitte/The Conquest of the Middle*, a psycho-thriller about a doctor falsely claiming to cure cancer. Strangest sounding of the lot is Per Holst's *Die Geheimnisse/The Secret Weapon* charting a war between families of apes.

VIRUS

Now Penal Colony (release date September, '94) is in the can, producer Gale Ann Hurd turns her attention to *Virus*, a

Sci-Fi shocker written by Chuck Pfarrer who penned John Woo's *Hard Target* and also plays the first victim in that brilliant actioner. Former navy SEAL Pfarrer wrote *Virus* as a comic strip for Dark Horse first and the subsequent series of graphic novels has since become a huge bestseller. It's about mar-merchant seamen who happen upon an abandoned nuclear-equipped Chinese ship. Once on board they discover the vessel has been contaminated by an intergalactic computer virus that gives hardware intelligence. These smart machines then use body parts to replicate themselves in a story that's a mix of *Aliens* and *Terminator*. *Virus* will be one of the projects Hurd will make for Paramount under her new three-year deal with aforementioned studio head Sherry Lansing. Other projects include *Firestorm* and *Global PD*. Pfarrer has just scripted *The Green Hornet* for Universal and director Joe Dante.

THE MASK

And speaking of Dark Horse Comics... As New Line Cinema ready a top secret project combining their three superstar maimers Freddy, Jason and Leatherface in one blood-spurting epic, they're currently lending what the newly-owned Ted Turner company expect to be their next big franchise. It's *The Mask* directed by Chuck Russell, of *Nightmare 3: Dream Warriors*/*The Blob* fame, star-



Above: Examples of CFX's artistry in *Death Machine*

ring comedian Jim Carrey, Peter Greene, Peter Onorati and Amy Yasbeck. Carrey (who appeared in *Once Bitten*, *Peggy Sue Got Married*, *Earth Girls Are Easy* and the upcoming *Ace Ventura: Pet Detective*) plays timid banker Stanley Ipkiss who discovers an ancient luminescent mask which, when worn, transforms him into an indestructible, wise-cracking superhero. The problem? It also makes him act out his innermost desires, both good and bad, and allows him to comfort his body in innumerable ways, move at warp speed and dance like Fred Astaire. Ken Ralston, the ILM computer graphic genius behind *Death Becomes Her*, is creating the digital and optical special effects (see illustration for an exclusive look at the preliminary design tests from the ILM Photo Shop) for the \$20 million undertaking

while Greg Cannom handles the make-up designs which New Line are saying will be like nothing ever seen on film before.

KEEN SCENE

What happened to *The Hills Have Eyes 3* mentioned in these pages last year? Well, the feature debut of Wes Craven's son Jonathan is still very much on the cards. Bob Keen's Image Animation have been contracted to design the special make-up effects for the sequel which will be shot in Africa and also carry the additional subtitle *The Outpost*. Keen's team have just finished working on *Stanley's Dragon* for Centel TV and TriStar's big new Canadian TV series *Zoo*. People where a zookeeper finds out his animals can talk, but they expect to get

even busier as they are juggling with a number of projects at the moment. Also to be shot in Africa is the DNA tale *Dying with Life* while the Vietnam zombie saga *The Glade* is set for Australian locations. Disney's live-action *Rudyard Kipling's Jungle Book* is a biggie for Bob too and he's looking forward to starting work on *Hellraiser 4: Bloodlines* in January plus Clive Barker's next directional effort *Lord of Illusion*, the highly anticipated Harry D'Amour adaptation now rewritten into more manageable form.

CFX

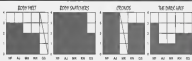
And talking of make-up men. You'll read more about them in the next issue of *Shivers* in our coverage of Steve Norington's *Death Machine*. But here's an early plug for Creature Effects (CFX for short), the latest all-British make-up outfit prepared to take on the Americans. Dave Elsey, Cliff Wallace, Alan Hedgcock and Brendan Loneragan are the talented foursome who've worked on everything from *Alien 3* to *Split Second* and are calling themselves "The FX persons' FX persons". For a start they've invented a new eurothane elastomer to replace foam latex as a skin substitute. Wallace, whose first horror novel (inexplicable is published soon by Headline Books, said, "This new pliable material has a more translucent look which not only makes it easier to punch hair into but also makes every



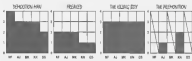
What the critics think, rated out of 4

Range: 0 = Don't bother 1 = Bareable 2 = Fair 3 = Good 4 = Unbeatable - Not seen/Reggie

	N.F.	A.J.	M.K.	K.N.	G.S.
BOOY MELT (Phil Proby)	3	3	2	2	
BOOY SMATCHERS (Abel Ferrara)	4	4	4	4	2
CRONOS (Guillermo Del Toro)	4	4	-	3	3
THE DARK HALF (George Romero)	3	1	1	2	2
DEMOLITION MAN (Marco Brambilla)	4	3	3	3	2
FREAKED (Alex Winter/Tom Siem)	2	2	2	1	1
THE KILLING BOX (George Hickenlooper)	3	3	3	3	3
THE PREMONITION (Rumble Hammerich)	-	1	-	2	-



Pumping irony in designer cheap psychobombs
Soldiers of misfortune in a ludicrous Ferrara hyperbolic
A Clockwork Blood Orange
Hell-heard flowers tactics hell-strong King



Stationed knows all there is to know about The Cyrogenic Game
Alex Winter runs over delirious of disaster
The Defiant Ones go carnival
Hiding what's what? horror from not so wonderful Copenhagen

Regular Critics: N.F. Nigel Peppas (Time Out); A.J. Alan Jones (Screen); M.K. Mark Kermode (Fangoria); K.N. Keith Newman (Junior movie); Guest Critics: Giuseppe (Spike) (Spike TV) (journalist)

model head and torso totally believable. Unpainted, you can intricately colour it more easily too." Hedgecock also has a book waiting in the wings. Co-written by Mark Salisbury, *Behind the Mask: The Secrets of Hollywood's Monster Makers* (Titan Books next Spring) focuses on the superstar make-up men Rick Baker, Stan Winston etc and is illustrated with fabulous never-before-seen shots of the maestros at work.

VENICE OUTRAGE

Red Boy Bobby is the latest borderline fantasy to cause massive controversy. Launched at the Venice Film Festival, and shown at the UFF, those who didn't walk out in disgust have called it provocative and daring with something to offend everyone. Written and directed by Rolf De Heer, this Italian/Australian co-production features religious freaks, incest, copious sweating and animal cruelty and is about an abused man (Nicholas Hope), dubbed the "Cling Wrap Killer" after he suffocates his parents to death, entering reality for the first time and soaking up knowledge like a human sponge. De Heer (whose work includes the Sci-Fi thriller *Incident at Raven's Gate*) used 30 cameramen and women to film Bobby's experiences in different visual styles as he walks the streets encountering assorted weirdos, punks, rockers, sex-starved Salvation Army cohorts and other sundry pervers. Cutting edge, unflinching and bravely shocking, watch out for this one when Entertainment releases it here next Spring.

BITS AND PIECES

—The total top of the boring M



Above: *Red Boy Bobby* in murderous mode

Butterfly means director David Cronenberg will get back to his Horror roots. That's after he acts again opposite Margot Kidder in Gary Ledbetter's **Eyes That Went Away**. Producer Julie Coman teams up with director Elio Greggio for the spoof **Silence of the Hams**. And judging by the cast Shelley Long, Charlene Tilton, Joanna Pacula, Martin Balsam and John Astin the silence will be deafening! Doing well at Hong Kong cinemas at the moment is the comedy(!) movie **Complicated Rape Case**. Prolific producer Pierre David's next movies are **Employee From Hell** and **Haunted Precinct**. Philippe Mora, the **Howling II** director, is currently helming **Pterodactyl Woman from Beverly Hills** starring Beverly D'Angelo, Bron James, Marcel Marceau and Barry Humphries. James Dougherty, scripter of **Steel and Lace**, cast a **Deadly Spell** and the **Attack of the 50 Ft Woman** remake, next turns his attention

to an update of the Rene Clair 1944 fantasy **It Happened Tomorrow**. That's the one about a man who finds a newspaper from two days into the future which predicts his death. Julie Davis directs **Witchcraft VI: The Devil's Mistress**. The original Leatherface, Gunnar Hansen, is the star of Gary Jones's **Blood Fever**. Producers George Jackson and Doug McHenry of **Houseparty** and **New Jack City** fame are making writer/director Preston Whitman's **The Walking Dead**. **Nonnie** is the equivalent of the Loch Ness Monster in the Ozarks. It's also the title of Michael Perry's adventure script about the mythical sea creature. With **A Vengeance** finds a young woman embarking on a frightening journey to uncover the secrets of her gnarly pest. Melissa Gilbert and Jack Scalia star for director Michael Switzer. Scalia is also

starring opposite Bo Derek in **Shattered Image**, a film noir thriller directed by Fritz (*Children of the Corn*) Kiersch. After saying **The Vanishing** revamp was the film he wanted to make, and then trashing it when it nose-dived Stateside, George Sluizer has had better luck with **Dark Blood**. The movie has been completely cancelled due to the death of star River Phoenix. Violent murder, sleazy sex and occult madness are professed in **Dark Intent**. **Sherlock Holmes Vs Dracula** features Christopher Walken, Timothy Dalton and a host of supporting stars including Phil Collins. Stalked and terrorized by a psychopath, a beautiful woman takes drastic measures only to find out she's **Deed Wrong**. Carotids have paid \$1 million to buy **Sade**, the acclaimed biography of the infamous Marquis written by Maurice Lever, for director Paul Verhoeven and editor Gerard Depardieu or Jack Nicholson in the title role.

It's the Arctic Circle, 2009, and in a future poisoned by toxic waste, fugitive guerilla Jurgen Prochnow takes horrific vengeance on the leader of a vigilante group who murdered his father in Mike Kaunsmak's **The Last Border**. The L.A. Connection Comedy Theatre are currently giving the 1938 classic B movie **The Blob**, the overdubbing treatment **Bloobumwurst** may still star Steve McQueen, but all the dialogue is new and spoken live every night from behind the screen. When I spoke to George Miller recently in London he did not discount the possibility of a **Mad Max 4** some time in the future. In 3D too. Neil Jordan has co-written



Broken Dream with director John Boorman, a \$15 million post-apocalyptic adventure starring Winona Ryder... **Amie's** not confirmed, but **Total Recall 2** (probably not the final title) is currently being developed from the Philip K Dick short story **Mutiny Report**. **Brett (Lawrence Men)** Leonard will direct the film version of Dean Koontz's novel **Hidewey** which has the **Universal Soldier** theme of two men returned from the dead, one good, one evil.

Brooke Shields stars in the psycho horror **The Seventh Floor**. **Black Mieriah** is George Romero's next. Based on Jay Bonansanga's book, it's about a man who is cursed and can only stay alive by never stopping still. Lee and Janet Batchler, the married screenwriting team currently developing a Riddler storyline for **Batman 3** and director Joel Schumacher, have been given the job of finally getting the infamously long delayed, on/off film version of Michael Crichton's erotica **Fantasy Congo** in manageable script form. More early release dates for your advance **Fantasy** desires. John Waters's **Serial Mom**, March 1994. Michael Apted's **Blink**, April 94, the Sci-Fi thriller **Euphoria**, May 84, **The Saint**, Christmas 94. William Messa is directing **The Darkening** and Steve Wang **Guyver II**. If **Time Cop** sounds like the same old stuff, if all Peter Hyams directs Jean-Claude Van Damme in this time travel actioner. Eddie Murphy dons fangs and stars with both his brothers, Charles Murphy and Vernon Lynch Jr., in the horror comedy **Vampire In Brooklyn** to be directed next June by Wes Craven. You may be interested to know that the next Bigas Luna movie, **Perdita Durango** is the sequel to David Lynch's **Wild at Heart**.

Job Stuart, scripter of *Die Hard* and *The Fugitive* is writing the fourth *Indiana Jones* movie—Abel Ferrara is developing a screenplay based on the William Gibson story *New Rose Hotel*. Gibson authored *Neuromancer* and *Virtual Light*, two hot Sci-Fi projects that have inexplicably not yet been brought to the screen. Vicente Aranda, the Spanish director of *The Blood Spattered Bride*, is currently dabbling in the genre again with *Intruso/Intruder* starring Victoria Abril. Remaining

In Spain, Gonzalo Suarez directs a new Fantasy **The Detective and Death**. Actress Jane Horrocks meets the ghosts of infamous murderers, like Hywel Bennett's Dr Craven and Sir John Mills's Jack the Ripper, who offer **Deadly Advice** on killing her domineering mother. ... Jerry Zucker is preparing the **Airplane**-type comedy **Frankenstein Goes to Suburbia** to ride on the publicity coat-tails of Ken Branagh's *Mary Shelley* opus. ... Anna Campion, sister of **The Piano** director Jane, makes her feature debut with **Bloody Weekend** where a group of teens drop acid with murderous results. ... Christina Applegate stars in Michael Fassbender's **Cyberstom**. ... Another mad doctor is on the loose in Carl Schenkel's **Exquisite Tenderloin** starring James Remar and Charles Dance.

Jean-Jacques Annaud will direct **The Foundation**, an adaptation of Isaac Asimov's Sci-Fi trilogy set several hundred years in the future. The million dollar deal with Asimov's estate also gives TriStar Pictures and **The Name of the Rose/Quest for Fire** director options to generate sequels based on other Foundation books. The picture is pencilled in for Summer release 1996. Don 'The Dragon' Wilson is **Cyber-tracker**. You can't escape the terror of **The Fraternity**, Mark L. Lester's news which 'Exposes an evil force on America's college campuses that will shock and terrify you, this time without mercy'. The British Horror Revival continues with **Beg** directed by Robert Golden, the man responsible for the 'Mr Kipling' cake commercials. It's about a maniac who sees dogs inside his victims' torsos. Fox are planning a big budget remake of one of their most successful franchises, **Planet of the Apes**... Ace scripter Caroline Thompson (Edward Scissorhands/The Nightmare Before Christmas), now turned director with **Bleek Beauty**, told me on the set of that new Warner Bros picture that she will indeed be tackling the screenplay she wrote with Martin Short in mind as her next project. It's called **The Geek** and concerns the comic misadventures of a half man/half chicken living in a freak animal zoo...

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Summary

Figure 1

References

Postulated Theorem

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COMPETITION WINNERS SHIVERS #9

CHURCH

ANSWERS: 1: Nightbreed; 2: Demons.

WINNERS: Neil Garrett, Henleaze, Bristol; J Hillsley, Chessington, Surrey; Dave Baldock, Fulham, London SW6; Steven Geburly, Boxworth, Cambridgeshire; Graham Clennell, South Stanley, Co Durham; Geoffrey Clennell, South Stanley, Co Durham; Gary Jukes, Rowley Regis, W Midlands; Peter Dight, Elean, Hants; Jared Barker, Brighouse, W Yorks; R Howell, New Addington, Croydon.

BRAINDEAD

ANSWERS: 1: Dead alive; 2: Heavenly Creatures.

WINNERS: Ian Boote, Huyton, Merseyside; D Watterson, Huyton, Merseyside; Paul Coomber, Stringbourn, Kent; Denise Storey, Stanley, Co Durham; Stephen Dunn, Weston-Super-Mare, Avon; W Rossiter, Menton, Rutland.

Events

Film, Sci-Fi and Comic Fair
Gloucester Leisure Centre, Bruton Way,
Gloucester: December 4th
11am-4.30pm. Admission: £1.00 adults
50p children/OAPs. Special guest
David Prowse. Over 200 stalls boasting
Star Wars/Trek, Aliens, Balmain,
Or Who, trading cards, comics,
magazines, videos, latest kits, related

data: information/bookings 0527
5/25/2025

Fanzines

Paperback, Pulp & Comic Collector Magazine for fans of SF, Horror, TV/Film, Hero, Crime. 100 pages colour. No 7 includes Dr Who Weird Tales £2.95 to ZARDOZ 30 Whitcroft Drive Marsh, Wiltshire. 0413-40J





Shivers interview by Alan Jones

THE FUNNY MAN actually has a rather unusual history. It began as a script titled

Family Meal written by special make-up man Neil (Nightbreed) Gorton, to generate work for himself during a bleak period of recessionary unemployment, which was picked up by producer Nigel Odell for Nomad Pictures, the company he owns with school chum Sprackling. It progressed to a half hour short called **Hand of Fate** filmed over a week in the Summer of '92 for £10,000. Based on the distributor excitement that was caused at last year's MIFED, the short was expanded to feature length, the budget upped to \$1 million via private investment, and **The Funny Man** Mark Two was shot on location at a disused Henley-on-Thames

senatorium and at Shepperton Studios during four weeks last Summer.

The Funny Man tells the tale of Max (Benny Young), a record industry king-pin, winning the ancestral home owned by gambler Callum (Lee) in a high stakes poker game. After moving into the forbidding mansion, Max discovers it's haunted by an evil spirit from the 4th Dimension which appears in the guise of a demented jester (Tim James). Soon Max's family and friends fall prey to the harlequin from hell's wicked sense of humour

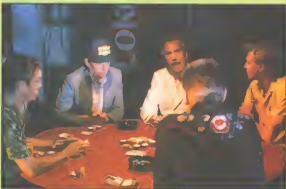
and dastardly deadly deeds. Bodies are disembowelled, eyes are stilettoed out, dismembered limbs are displayed in a mock art gallery-cum-channel house, brains fly through the air complete with eyeballs on stalks, children are electrocuted and heads get severed in Sprackling's grotesque orgy of gory gaggle and grisly gagging also starring Ingrid Iscary, Ed Bishop, Bob Sessions and Pauline Black from the pop group Selector as Senga, the Palm Grier lookalike who shoots fireworks from her fingers.

Bodies are disembowelled, eyes are stilettoed out

Christopher Lee makes his Horror comeback in a violent comic strip described by director Simon Sprackling as "A sick *Monty Python* meets a punk Freddy Krueger in the blaxploitation *Twilight Zone*". Confused? You won't be after **The Funny Man's** funny man reveals all.

Opposite page: **The Funny Man** moves in for the kill;

Above: Football with a severed head; **Below left:** The Henley-on-Thames senatorium location; **Right:** Christopher Lee loses all at the fatal card game



Vital to getting financing for **The Funny Men** was Horror icon Lee's commitment to the project which was rather a simple offer according to Sprackling: "I phoned him up and asked if he'd have a look at the script. Then he asked me to meet him and, after a lengthy rant about all the terrible Horror scripts he gets sent, said he liked mine and that he'd love to do it. The only thing he was concerned about was the swearing which I promised to cut. He had no problem with all the bloodshed which he thought was justified."

The one-time singer with the punk band No Fixed Hairstyle — "We had a vague deal with EMI and sang crap songs like Jackie Show Us Your T—t — wanted Lee for two main reasons as he explained, "Lee plays two roles, one within the film and one within my conception of cinema history. In **The Funny Men** he's a mysterious guy who doesn't seem to care when he loses his home to Max. Throughout the rest of the story you don't really know where he is when you glimpse him in this strange white ethereal place surrounded by a house of cards. Essentially he's the manipulator of events. He could be God, Death, the Devil or a magician. Whatever, he's an omnipotent enigma within the story."

He continued, "The other role he plays is as the first real Horror character I ever knew or paid attention to. During the card game Max basically calls Callum an idiot and I wanted the audience to be saying to themselves 'Don't do that. It's Chris Lee! Something's bound to go wrong! It's one of the main jokes, that we know exactly who Lee is and what he stands for. Then I turn him slightly from being 'too scary to stupid scary'." Although Lee only clocked in for two days work, Sprackling gave assurances that his role is a significant one. He added, "Stars like Lee in the latter stages of their career do tend to dive in and out of cameo parts. But he doesn't just pop up to scream here as he's in the beginning, the middle and the end. That was one of the aspects he lived most about my script — his character progressed. Well, that, and the fact we gave into his demands to be chauffeur driven to the location."

The Funny Men couldn't be less like a standard stalk-and-slasher showcasing a franchiseable maniac in Sprack-



"What the Jasons, Freddy's and Michaels do is totally illogical"

ling's mind. He remarked, "If I was Freddy Krueger, the first thing I'd do before killing the girls is rape them first! What the Jasons, Freddy's and Michaels do is totally illogical. And the whole idea of the false ending has now reached such ludicrous proportions. I haven't got one of those for that reason. The **Funny Men** can't die so what's the point in trying to kill him in the first place? I like the idea that no one has got a chance against him. The interesting aspect to this film is what he's doing it all for. What's he getting out of it? Basically the **Funny Man** and Callum are just into having a horribly huge laugh at everyone else's expense."

Sprackling likens the ominous atmosphere he's aiming for in **The Funny Men** to the volatile mood of a crowd of football supporters. He noted, "A mob can be calm and happy one moment, unreasonable and violent the next. You know the feeling when a drunk chats to you at the back of a nightclub. All of a sudden on edge will creep into the conversation which threatens to turn nasty. That's the sort of violence I know all about after attending film school in Edinburgh. (I only went there because of the tax licensing laws!) **The Funny Men** has the same kind of marginal brutality coupled with an unwholesome sense of humour. The British seem to find comic value in violence more than any other nation. That's the basic message of the movie. So is being in the right place at the right time

to take part in cosmic events that can change your life."

The Funny Men himself is played by an old friend of Sprackling's scriptwriter brother Robert. Tim James was also the production manager on the film and often had to conduct business in full costume. Sprackling described James's look as "A malevolent mixture of the Joker card and a court jester with the duality of Mr Punch. Tim actually ad-libbed many of his lines in the movie while also cross-dressing, clamping about, speaking in different dialects, doing a striptease and sending up famous movies. The whole point is the other characters don't know what the 'F'k he's up to at any given time. If I had my way, and the censors would let me, I'd advertise this film with the tag-line, **The Funny Men, What a C**t!**"

Despite only making a 16mm James Bond satire (**A View to a Shandy**) and an award-winning short (**Augustine**) prior to helming **The Funny Men**, Sprackling refused to be intimidated by the whole process. He said, "I'm not scared of screwing it all up. There's no point in getting stressed out. If I have buggered up the whole thing, there's little I can do about it now. I feel I've followed my own originality, the lack of budget has made me inventive in an extremely liberating way and I've acknowledged what my limitations are. What rule says you have to be brilliant the first time around anyway? My philosophy has been to keep on enthusiasm, have a

Neil Gorton's hand puts on the Funny Man make-up

leugh with your friends and enjoy making it. That's the only maxim I've worked out. If you have fun making a movie, the energy transfers to the screen and gets broadcast to an audience."

Sprackling's favourite genre movie is George Romero's **Merlin**. "Because it inverts everything like **The Funny Men** does. It's about something else entirely than what it appears to be on the surface. Horror films that are just concerned with Horror aren't very interesting. My movie isn't **Braindead** in the gore department but it shares the same Tax Avery cartoon approach. I want everyone to know exactly where I'm coming from and audiences to snigger away in empathy. Horror is best when it's political and satirical and **The Funny Men** is both."

So convinced are Sprackling and Corwell that **The Funny Men** is a winner, they've already got their next film lined up. **Rat-catcher** is a Sci-Fi Horror movie about bio-genetic engineering in the year 2037. Sprackling continued, "Americans will love **The Funny Men** like they loved **Monty Python**. One of the biggest mistakes we make as a nation is assuming what we should be doing is emulating someone else. The real benchmark to me is pop music. Britain has been successfully exporting that for donkey's years. What we shouldn't do is try and give the Americans what they've already got."

That's why Sprackling is overjoyed at the much prophesized death of the British Film Industry. He explained, "Kill them all, I say, and start with Emma Thompson! What sort of role model is David Puttnam for Christians? I couldn't even grow a beard if I tried! There will be a rebirth when people stop telling you how hard it is to get anything done in this country and when scripts aren't deemed 'too commercial' for British Screen funding. The one thing that's passed me off the most about **The Funny Men** is having to make it on the Shepperton backlot. Me, a degenerate and drunk, directing a film in the bastion of the British Film Industry! Surely I can't sink any lower in the future."

STARLINER LETTERS

Send your letters to: *Starliner Letters*, *Shivers* magazine, 9 Blades Court, Deodar Road, LONDON SW15 2NU, UK or Fax to: 081 875 1588

A DIRECTOR WRITES

Richard Stanley
Hollywood, California

In a late update in the continuing *Dust Devil* saga, Miramax Films have asked me to point out that they were not the producers of the film and that the responsibility for the 80 minute cut must rest entirely with Palace Pictures. Miramax took a hands off approach to *Dust Devil*'s production and approved the final cut that was released in the UK. Having acted honorably throughout, Miramax remain on cordial terms with the Shadow Theatre Limited (Stanley's production company) and plan to release the full 110 minute edition of *Dust Devil* theatrically in the US January 1994 with a video release of the complete version scheduled for later in the year.

The ungraded 80 minute cut that saw release in some European territories was rushed out before the completion of post-production in an effort to liberate blocked funds and has subsequently been withdrawn with the consent of all parties. *Dust Devil* has now officially shown a profit on its UK release, grossing more money than the Cannes Festival Palm D'Or winner *Barton Fink* (according to figures supplied by Miramax) with a re-release planned for the Far East and several European territories.

Channel Four will televise the complete *Dust Devil* this Autumn in an extended cut prepared specially for UK TV that I believe is an improvement on the version currently available on domestic videotape. (The film has been digitally remastered with both sound and picture quality boosted for the broadcast.)

Dust Devil owes its existence largely to the positive press attention during its turbulent post-production and I wish to extend my thanks and lasting gratitude to all who supported its strange cause and made its continued success possible. May the dark angels and all the be-

nign, maleficent demons of the genre watch over you always.

Ed: Thanks Richard. Nice to know you can make a difference if you take a stand and don't falter. Good luck with your *Island of Doctor Moreau* remake.

TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

D Stenden
Broadstairs, Kent

Hi to all readers of *Shivers*. I'm sure you all agree with me that it's the best magazine going. I have something bugging me and I would be interested in knowing what other readers think it concerns. *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* movies. You can buy magazines featuring full-colour pictures of all the blood, guts and gore. You can turn on TV and watch Stephen King's *World of Horror* with clips of the third film being made. What you can't do is see the films themselves. This is really stupid. As if anyone who doesn't like Horror would rent a film with that title! Isn't it about time they let us decide what we want to watch instead of having someone decide for us? When is *Jason Goes to Hell* released?

FRIDAY ON MY MIND

Craig McElroy
Tameside, Manchester.

I was very interested in your features on *The Final Friday*. I loved watching the other *Friday* the 13th films and think Jason is one of the best Horror characters on the screen. He always provides lots of nerve-racking tension and gives us some really heart-stopping moments. I'm really looking forward to Kane Hodder in the new film and once more watching the relentless battle between good and evil which only Jason can provide.

Ed: You may be interested to know that *The Return to the Texas Chainsaw Massacre* has just finished being filmed in secret in Dallas. Kim Henkel who scripted the Tobe Hooper original has written and directed this low budget Part 4. Guild Films have still yet to make up their minds whether to release *Jason Goes to Hell* theatrically or just on video. Whatever decision they make, and if any *Friday* deserves a cinema outing it's this one (it has made \$20 million at the American box-office), you won't see the film in any form until early in the New Year.

SCRIPTONITE

J Conner
Wood Green, London.

Could you please tell me where I could get translated film scripts of Italian Horror films? I

especially want *The Sect*, *La Setta* and the full version of *Opera and Phenomena*.

Ed: Normally I'd pass this sort of letter on to David McGilveray but I probably know more about this subject than he does. Scripts of any film, unless published in licensed book form, are highly illegal. I could tell you the story of one particular Fantasy bookshop taken to court for selling photocopied scripts of various Sci-Fi blockbusters. But I haven't! (stated scripts, let alone translated ones, would be even harder to find. None of the movies you have listed exist as merchandise tie-ins in Italy. If they did, I would have had them on my bookshelves by now. Perhaps you've found a gap in a limited market to exploit commercially. Obviously some films do have pirated screenplays (hence this magazine does not endorse) so perhaps your best bet would be to scrutinise adverts in the various fanzines.

SANGSTER ANGST

Keith Williams
Neath, South Wales

Whilst appreciative of your passion for Italian Horror Cinema and its innumerable permutations, nonetheless it came as a massive relief to find that the latest issue of your excellent and still idiosyncratic magazine was virtually 'giallo-ite' for once. Not wishing to dictate what your content should be (I leave that up to your immaculate taste!), how about an article in the near future on the much underrated and ignored guru of Psycho-Hammer Cinema, Jimmy Sangster. He was a screenplay writer whose intricate story structures and bizarre plot concepts influenced not only fans of the Sixties but will be featured (and screwed up, no doubt) with the imminent revival of Hammer itself. Ciao!



Left: Script of *Opera* wanted, but less on the subject too

There is the hack who follows orders, churning out bland TV movies without a trace of style. There's also the hack, usually with a rebellious streak, who is forced to make something watchable, often without money, resources and talent, from a succession of exploitation pictures. Just such a man was Robert Hartford-Davis, ignored for most of his life and unwept in the 16 years since he died.

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

Shivers feature by David McGillivray

It's surprising that Bob, as he was known to a small circle of friends, remains undiscovered, his films seldom if ever revived. He virtually invented the British sexploitation film in the early Sixties, and although much of his work is astoundingly bad — *Gonks Go Beat* is down there with the worst pop musicals ever made — it includes two potential cult Horror movies, the outrageously overthought *Corruption* and the mysteriously flawed *Incense for the Damned*.

Unlike later sexploitation directors, who jumped into feature films from the firm glamour film trade, Bob was a product of the old studio system, a member of the last generation able to work its way up through the industry. He was nearly 40 when he began directing B-movies. They were too cheap and sleazy to be considered by the almighty Rank and ABC circuits, but able to scrape back their meagre budgets from the dying chairs of independent cinemas.

A boy from the provinces, Bob was fascinated by London and especially wicked Soho, a touring locale in his films. By the time he was able to choose his own projects, London was swinging and populated by dolly birds in mini-skirts or even less. Bob was in his element, and seems to have played the role of the irascible macho director to the hilt. But he remained, in a typically English way, reticent about the portrayal of nudity and sex on the screen.

By the early Seventies he was a Toytown megalomaniac, far too excitable and neurotic for the lusty British film industry to contain. "He lived at fever



"Somebody screaming, somebody dying, a throat slit — that was a great picture to him."

pitch," says his former writer Derek Ford. "Somebody screaming, somebody dying, a throat slit — that was a great picture to him." Naturally his destiny lay in Hollywood, where he was caught up in the short-lived exploitation cycle before dying of a heart attack at the age of 54. His talents were so unpredictable that it's impossible to know where his career might have led.

Robert Hartford-Davis was born in Ramsgate, Kent, in 1923. The only source of infor-

mation for his early life is his own CV, which has suspicious gaps in some places and is packed with equally suspicious glamorous incident in others. For the record he claims to have left school at thirteen and completed his education at evening classes. After the War he broke into the movies as an electrician at Teddington Studios then moved on to Ealing, where he was a clapper-loader and focus-puller and also worked in the cutting rooms.

The first undisputed fact is

Right: Under Peter Cushing's scalpel in *Corruption*; Below: Patrick Magee crucified by *The Fiend*



that Bob went to South Africa in the late Fifties. Here he directed what may have been his first film, a short version of **A Christmas Carol** in which white Scrooge's conscience is pricked by the plight of the poor black Cratchit family: a daring anti-apartheid statement which may have precipitated Bob's return to England. **A Christmas Carol** and Bob's early British movies suggest that their director entered the movies with a social conscience. But this is seriously doubted by Derek Ford: "I don't think I could honestly say he was socially committed," he confesses. "What I think he was aware of was the possibility of a good story."

In 1961 Bob directed two films that showed the shape of things to come. The documentary short **Stranger in the City** is about a day in London and features staged scenes with prostitutes and strippers. Bob's first feature, **Crocodile**, a melodrama in which rival gangs invade a holiday bungalow occupied by a young couple, sounds like a dry run for **Corruption**. The film received few if any screenings. "Overacted, ludicrous and amateurish," declared the *Monthly Film Bulletin*. It was produced and distributed by a new company called Unifilms, whose meagre output also included a saucy comedy, **Stork Talk**, written by brothers Donald and Derek Ford.

For Derek Ford's life story, see my book **Doing Rude Things**. Derek wrote his first radio play in 1948, became a director during the British sex film era of the Seventies, and is now a novelist. He thinks he first met Bob in 1958, when Derek was an accountant for a company making primitive TV commercials. Bob was hired as an assistant.

By the early Sixties Bob and Derek were members of the independent movie community — others included directors Gerry O'Hara and Michael Winner — who used to hang out at a coffee bar called Act 1 Scene 1 in Old Compton Street, the heart of Soho, where the entire British film industry was based. Old Compton Street also boasted the Compton cinema, run by sleaze entrepreneur Michael Klinger and Tony Tenser. It was the first cinema in Britain to show uncensored sex films



Salacious material made censor-friendly by the addition of spurious moral indignation

Derek recalls, "One day Bob said to me, 'We should get together and maybe work out a few projects.' He had a connection with Michael and Tony, who were about four doors along. We went up to their office and Bob told a whole lot of lies about my experience as a screenwriter. Michael and Tony, who knew even less about the film industry than we did, were very impressed and they said, 'Well, you two guys come up with a project and we'll look at it.'"

We came up with something to do with a lot of travelling because we both wanted to travel. And they said, 'No, no, no. We're not talking about that kind of budget.' And then Tony said, 'Here's this newspaper story.'"

Tenser had been reading the scandalous accounts of a group of schoolgirls who'd taken to wearing Robertson's gilliwog brooches to advertise the loss of their virginity. This engaging idea formed the basis of the equally scandalous **The Yellow Teddybears**, to all intents the first British attempt at a new American genre, 'exploitation', in which salacious material was made censor-friendly by the addition of spurious moral

indignation. It was a case, as exploiter Stanley Long puts it, of "Look at this, please, but it's terrible, isn't it?"

"I was very averse to it," insists Derek, "because in those days you couldn't have anything to do with schoolgirls and sex. But, as you know, it turned into a sociological document. It's all very well to teach sex, but how do you teach morality? And thirty years later that debate is still carrying on."

The Yellow Teddybears ("Director hits a new low" — *Monthly Film Bulletin*) starred Annelle Whiteley as sixth-former Linda, tempted from school by London street life, and Jill Adams from **Crossplot**. The cameraman was Peter Newbrook, who was to work on another eight films with Bob until an acrimonious split in 1970. **The Yellow Teddybears** has not been seen since it was first released.

Also for Klinger and Tenser, Bob directed and the Fords wrote **Saturday Night Out** about the adventures of merchant seamen on leave in London. Although there is no sex or nudity in the film, its tone is relentlessly sordid as the sail-

The Black Torment takes possession of John Turner

ors hunt down their one-night stands

Bob's first colour film was **The Black Torment**, a barnstorming period melodrama which, like the Hammer films that inspired it, is no longer as marrow-chilling as it seemed on first viewing. Nevertheless it has a very literate script and still delivers some mild shocks, the best timed of which has an uncoupled wheel-chair trundling down a grand staircase.

The Fords originally set the historical in the 1820s, the time of the Empire line — high waists and no décolletage. Tenser wasn't having any of this: "We want a bit of... thet in it," he demanded. For this and no other reason the action was shifted back to the 1780s, thus allowing the film to open with busty Edna Ronay (daughter of gourmet Egon and now a knitwear designer) jiggling enticingly as she's chased through the woods.

What develops is scarcely original. Milord (John Turner) brings his second wife (Heather Sears from **Saturday Night Out**) to his stately pile and she discovers a family secret involving a mad relative locked in the attic. The story requires reams of exposition, but strangely enough it was not this that was pruned but a crucial plot point.

"We were shooting at Shepperton Studios," Derek remembers, "and Bob was getting so carried away with having this magnificent set and all those wonderful costumes that he was indulging himself and we were running about three days behind schedule. Tony and Michael came down in the second week and said, 'What's happening? How many pages are you behind?' Bob said, 'About ten I suppose.' And so — I'll never forget this — Tony picked up the script, ripped out ten pages and said, 'There you are, you're back on schedule.' The fulcrum of the plot is what he ripped out of it. To me the film doesn't make any sense."

This experience ended Bob's relationship with the Compton organization. Together with Peter Newbrook he formed Titan International to make more upmarket product. Their first attempt, **Gonks Go Beat**, was an unmitigated disaster, shelved for 28

years before receiving its premiere earlier this year on the Bravo cable channel) Bob gives the impression of having not the slightest interest in the beat boom, which his film purportedly exploits. The specially written songs (which both Lulu and the lead singer of the Nashville Teens have difficulty remembering) sound pre-1955. Bob also exhibits a carelessness worthy of Edward D. Wood Jr., leaving in a shot in which an actress accidentally trips over a floor tile.

If anyone had seen *Genks Go Beat* it's highly unlikely that Bob would have been able to do a deal with Rank, for which he produced two mediocre comedies. *The Sandwich Man* was a plotless string of lame old gags involving Michael Bentine. Bob then produced, but didn't direct, *Press For Time*, one of the sloppiest and silliest of the films Norman Wisdom threw together at the end of his movie career.

Up until this time the credits had scarcely registered Robert Hartford-Davis. *Corruption* put him directly in their firing line.

Almost to a man, and indeed a woman, they were appalled by this sordid and tasteless rubbish. But for the young ones, *Corruption* was a masterpiece of Grand Guignol with the most uproarious climactic mayhem ever seen in a British film.

The film reunited Bob with the Forde, who came up with a last-moving story about a brilliant surgeon (Peter Cushing) forced to kill women for their pituitary glands, which he uses to restore the face of his fiancée (Sue Lloyd), disfigured in an accident. The couple, quit swinging London ("Freak out, baby!" exclaims photographer Anthony Booth) for Cushing's house by the sea, which — shades of *Crossplot* — is invaded by a gang of thugs including the terrifying David Lodge (who appears in practically all Bob's films). Suddenly the laser, used by Cushing for the operations, goes berserk and slashes the entire cast to death! (An epilogue, implying that the whole business has been a dream, was shot later at the behest of Columbia, who wouldn't let the film go out with such a downbeat ending.)

The basic premise of *Corrup-*



"No woman will dare go home alone after seeing *Corruption*!"

tion is of course that of *Eyes Without a Face*. Coincidence, reckons Derek, who claims not to have seen Friary's 1959 picture, and also that his inspiration came from an article in the *New Scientist* which speculated on the use of lasers in surgery. "We had a storm of letters from surgeons saying it was ludicrous to suggest that lasers could ever be used for surgery. Lasers were used to break open safes. Nobody had seen a surgical laser at that time [1967] and that curious dentist's drill they use in the movie was a total invention."

Collectors should hunt down the American trailer for *Corrup-*

tion ("No woman will dare go home alone after seeing *Corruption*! Therefore no woman will be admitted alone to this super shocker!") and a foreign version of the film called *Laser Killer* which features incredible substitute footage, not written by Derek and probably not directed by Bob. In the British version Cushing's first victim is a prostitute (Jan Waters) murdered in her flat. In *Laser Killer* this scene is cut out so as not to tax the abilities of a different "actress", who is topless. Cushing steps her, deliberately puts his bloody hands on her naked breasts, and then graphically

slits her throat. Discovering the first gentleman of Horror behaving like a slasher in a video newly is akin to finding Katie Boyle in a porno movie.

For his next film, *The Smashing Bird I Used to Know*, Bob returned to the subject of teenage sex. Co-authored by an uncredited Derek Ford, the script bears more than a passing resemblance to a real-life scandal. (In 1958 Lana Turner's 14-year-old daughter, Cheryl Crane, murdered her mother's lover, gangster Johnny Stompanato.) Although it's played, as per, with all the stops out, this is artless sexploitation, not enjoyably campy melodrama, and the acting and writing are embarrassingly bad.

At this point, in 1969, Derek split with Bob to begin his own directing career. He says that he peppered his screenplays for Bob with so many technical instructions that he thought he might as well direct his own scripts and be done with it. "I used to write extremely detailed scripts for him and include comments in the margin — directional hints if you like — because I knew he often got a seizure on the set when his mind ceased to work. I've had it myself when I'm directing. It's a bloody nightmare, rather like an actor dying on stage. I knew he suffered from that perhaps six times a day."

Bob made one more film for Titan, an adaptation of Simon Raven's modern vampire novel *Doctors Wear Scarlet*, but it was another catastrophe consigned to the shelf. Terence Fisher wanted to film the novel, about an Oxford don who meets a vampire while on holiday in Greece, but somehow Bob got his hands on it, assembled a strong cast including Patrick Macnee and Peter Cushing, and took them off to Cyprus in 1969.

While they were on location, the money ran out. The film was left unfinished and Bob went on to his next project, *The Fiend*. But his partners in Titan, who wanted a return on their investment, decided that, with the aid of voice-overs, the existing material could be patched together and released. When Bob heard of the plan, he sued Titan and five other companies involved in the film and removed his name from the credits, substituting the pseudonym: "Michael Burrowes".



Edina Ronay attacked by the aristocratic maniac in *The Black Torment*

In 1970 announcements appeared in the trade press that Robert Hartford-Davis was "not responsible for the presentation of the film in its final form." After another two years the film was trade shown, as *Incense for the Damned*, but it wasn't shown in London until 1976.

The film's reputation is due entirely to *Honor* buff (now screenwriter) David Pines, who was one of only two critics at the trade show. For *Time Out* he wrote "It must be the first time in screen history that a filmmaker has disowned the only remotely good thing he's done." For the *Monthly Film Bulletin* he described the scene in which the don sinks his teeth into his girlfriend's throat as "one of the more extraordinary images of personal rebellion in the British cinema."

In the time it took to salvage *Incense for the Damned* Bob completed two more films, both for his new company World Arts Media. His last horror film, *The Fiend*, is about a fanatical religious sect headed by Patrick Magee, whose looniest member (Tony Beckley) saves fallen women by murdering them. He ends up nailing Magee to a cross. Here Bob has a large axe to grind. Presumably he was upset by newspaper reports of religious extremists brainwashing recruits, refusing blood transfusions, and the like. But he doesn't know how to channel his anger. Now this shoddy film looks like sub-Peter Walker.

The least sad about Bob's last British film, *Nobody Ordered Love*, the better. His attack on the corrupt movie industry, with Ingrid Pitt as a faded sex symbol, is a complete mess, notable only for the authenticity of the nude sedition. Both this film and *The Fiend* were released as double features to *Tales from the Crypt*.

In 1971 it was announced that Bob would direct three British pictures: *Berlin Zero-One*, about student revolt; *The Entrepreneur*, "a tragicomic yarn"; and *The Chetwicks*, an action adventure. None of them came to fruition. *Black Gunn* may have fendered too if an offer of backing hadn't come from America. Bob re-located the British screenplay to Los Angeles and went there to shoot it in 1972. "Ten years ago," he told a British reporter, "it was my ambition



He was upset by newspaper reports of religious extremists brainwashing recruits, refusing blood transfusions

to work in Hollywood. Now it has happened, it's just another place to make a picture."

Black Gunn is an utterly routine and poorly reviewed action picture, made to cash in on *Shakti*. All that happens is that the charmless Jim Brown hunts down his brother's killers. But the film seems to have done extraordinarily well for Columbia, who picked up the independent production. Bob declared that two sequels were in preparation and that he'd been offered the Lucky Luciano life story. The International European Critics, whoever they may have been, voted Bob the Best Action Director of 1973-74.

Bob's last completed film, *The Take*, is one indication of what might have been. Once again British source material (a characteric novel by GF Newman) was Americanized; a bent cop (Billy Dee Williams) is assigned to nail syndicate boss Vic Morrow. The time, however, the transplant was less awkward. Bob's direction, strictly mechanical in *Black Gunn*, is flashy and often exciting. But the film performed disappointingly and seems to have put an end to his fling with Columbia. In Britain

Victim of The Fiend

ported only in the trade paper *Screen International*. Writer Quentin Falk, a fan from the early days, noted, "*Corruption* and *The Smashing Bird I Used to Know*... were splendidly funded examples of anarchic story-telling and both admirably amoral for their time."

"He was mercurial," says Derek Ford of his former colleague. "He had an incredible temper and, when he died of a heart attack, I wasn't at all surprised because he used to drive himself under fantastic pressure all the time. The most demonstrative actor on the set was Robert Hartford-Davis. He was playing the part of being the film director. He was thinking, 'How do I look to that new young actress who came on the set today?' He lacked self-confidence and his answer to that was of course arrogance."

"I think he was a pretty good director actually. The cast were scared of him and that's what he wanted really. I don't think I was ever as good a director as he was because I was too sympathetic. I can see now what he was doing, when he was upsetting the actors. He was getting a bit of light in their eyes, he was livening them up."

On Poverty Row, of course, there are some actors — and technicians — who would need jump leads to liven them up. The desperate measures of this insecure director didn't always work. But every so often all the ingredients came together. And in maddeningly few of the films of Robert Hartford-Davis we have a wonderful, low-budget, crazy energy that is almost dazzling.

The Take was released as a second-feature to *Confessions of a Window Cleaner*.

For the last three years of his life Bob worked mostly in television. On Wednesday, 8th June, 1977, he began directing a TV movie, *Murder in Peyton Place*. He finished work on the Friday and went home to Beverly Hills, where, on Sunday, 12th June, he suffered a massive heart attack. He was rushed to the Cedars of Lebanon hospital, but was pronounced dead on arrival.

In Britain Bob's death was re-

ROBERT HARTFORD-DAVIS FILMOGRAPHY

1955 *The Man on the Cliff* (short; unconfirmed); 1958? *A Christmas Carol* (short; in South Africa); 1961: *Stranger in the City* (short); *Crosstrap*; 1963: *The Yellow Teddybears*, *That Kind of Girl* (produced only); *Saturday Night Out*; 1964: *The Black Torture*; 1965: *Gonks Go Best* (first shown 1963); *The Sandwich Men*; 1966: *Press For Time* (produced only); 1967: *Corruption aka Laser Killer*; 1968: *The Smashing Bird I Used to Know*, *Explosion* (story only, in Canada); *Incense for the Damned* (as Michael Burrows; first shown 1976); 1971 *The Fiend*, *Nobody Ordered Love*; 1972: *Black Gunn* (in U.S.); 1974: *The Take* (in U.S.); 1977: *Murder in Peyton Place* (U.S. TV movie; completed by Bruce Kessler, director of *The Gay Deceivers* [1969] and *Simon - King of the Witches* [1971]).





Shivers interview by Joe Nazzaro

WHEN Orion Pictures offered Romero the opportunity to write and direct the chilling story of a novelist stalked by his own villainous alter-ego, it was a project he couldn't turn down. "Four times I've wanted to work on King novels and four times it never happened", he declared. "I always wanted to do one because *Creepshow* was not a novel; it was original stories and little sketches. Initially we were going to make *Salem's Lot* together, and when Warner Bros introduced us to Steve, Chris [Romero's wife, actress/producer Christine Forrest] and I flew up and he gave us a copy of *The Stand*. Inside he wrote, 'Let's make this book!' That even got to the point where they printed the paperback with 'Soon to be film by George

"Four times I've wanted to work on King novels and four times it never happened"

Romero' on it. A little premature as it never happened. Now they've just shot it for television.

Romero continued, "Then I worked on it with Larry Cohen for TV. That was originally going to be seven hours long, Larry had written a great script, but they cut it back to six hours, then four and it kept getting delayed and delayed. Of course there was *Pet Semetary* which I worked on for a long time. I'd already storyboarded it and really had it ready to fly based on Steve's script. But that became a scheduling problem because I was reshooting the ending for *Monkey Shines* and they had to start filming. That's why I was delighted to get a chance to do

one of his novels. I wanted something that would keep Steve's voice, a book that felt like the world he writes about, a familiar world, full of brand names, a place where we all live. He just shakes it up a bit and lets it run amok."

Romero was careful to maintain the tone of *The Dark Half* novel, particularly the mysterious relationship between the main character Thad Beaumont and his evil counterpart, George Stark, while compressing a tremendous amount of plot into a more manageable script. Romero said, "I talked to Steve about a few of the changes I wanted to make and I was pretty happy with the way it went. You

Two Titans of Terror Stephen King and George Romero, team up yet again for another foray into the best-selling author's flight-filled imagination. But although Romero brought King's screenplay of the EC Comics inspired *Creepshow* to life in 1982, and wrote part of a *Creepshow 2* episode, *The Dark Half* marks the director's first true adaptation of a King novel.

Opposite page: The Stark Half; Below left: Timothy Hutton is evil personified; Middle: George Romero at work; Right: Through the Looking Glass



do feel restrained as I wanted to respect the original work as much as possible. There are some people who would be ruthless, and have been, and made a film that had nothing to do with the stuff he wrote. I was comfortable with this story, I enjoyed writing it, and didn't feel I had to do any radical surgery on it."

He continued, "Mostly I intertwined some characters and made two or three of them into one. For the most part the changes were pretty superficial. The biggest change is probably that Stark is not a twin. In the book the twin idea is more of an allegory and Stark is an entity that Thad apparently creates entirely out of his subconscious. I thought it would be easier in a shorter time frame to have Stark be his twin and have the twin's remnants buried. The book has Stark actually climbing out of his grave."

In his enthusiasm to direct **The Dark Half**, Romero forgot two of the most important rules of film-making: never work with children or animals. Not only did he have to contend with the two toddlers playing Thad's kids but he also had to find ways of dealing with five thousand birds unleashed at the climax. He chuckled, "It's funny I'm always getting into these situations whether it's cockroaches or monkeys! I didn't think of the problems with the babies at first—how could they be worse than monkeys? In a way they were because there are no labour laws protecting monkeys. Actually the kids were great. There's a dolly shot of Thad and his wife [Amy Madigan] sitting with the kids in bed and much of the vocal baby stuff we recorded 'wild' and dubbed in. But some of those noises were done with a live track and they were just great. It's a shock within the context of the movie to see shots of those innocent blank faces."

On the other hand, working with a massive flock of any birds was far from simple. In the novel, dark clouds of shrieking sparrows are used as harbingers of evil and at the finale they transport Stark back to the land of the dead. Several thousand out-throat finches (named for the red band around their necks) doubled for the sparrows and a specially constructed wind tunnel had to be used for daily flying exercises to keep the



"There was always the decision of when to reveal Stark"

feathered extras in shape. Memos were circulated days in advance, warning the crew in a light-hearted manner, that 'Bird Day' was coming. "It was really tough," Romero confirmed. "The biggest problem was containing the birds. For every shot, stage hands and bird trainers would figure out what exactly had to be in frame, and then a cage was built just outside camera vision which went all around the crew as well. A system of circus-like chutes and passages channelled the birds into the scene. The lights had to be outside the cage otherwise the birds would land on them and fry. Our bird trainer was fabulous and worked for three months conditioning them and getting them used to people like Tim Hutton in a five-hour make-up job. He would put mannequins in their cages so they would learn to land on them."

While the ending of **The Dark Half** was refilmed after principal shooting had wrapped, Romero contested it had been radically changed. He explained, "Originally we shot the ending as it is

in the book; Stark is pecked clean by the birds until he's a skeleton and is then carried away by them. Preview audiences said, and this is proof how literally some people think, 'Why are they taking him to Heaven? He should go to Hell! Apparently most people believe Heaven is up there. Aside from getting a laugh out of that response, Onca reacted to the criticism. What we finally reshot was the birds also taking the skeleton apart and breaking him into bits rather than carry him off bodily skyward."

"There was always the decision of when to reveal Stark," remarked Romero. "He's now revealed in the film where he was unmasked in the book, where he goes after Thad's agent. Beyond that, we had to ask ourselves, when do you tell the audience 'This is not Thad'? Even after you see Stark, people could believe 'Well, this is Jekyll and Hyde and he's really Thad.' So it was a whole decision process of when we were exactly going to tell you Stark and Thad

Left: The Hand That Rocks The Cradle...

were two separate beings"

The Dark Half was actually finished in December, 1991, but due to financial problems at Onca Pictures, the film languished on the shelf with numerous other completed films such as **RoboCop 3**. It was eventually rescued by Columbia who finally released it Stateside last Spring. During this interim period, Romero kept a low profile although he does have a number of projects in development. He added, "Chris and I started a new company with one of our business partners from **Monkey Shines** so part of the time was taken up with that. I've also had some personal problems. Both my parents passed away within ten weeks of each other. We've also bought a new house."

The rest of the time has been spent at the New Line Cinema offices Romero revealed. "We're developing a Whitley (**The Hunger**) Streiber novel called **Unholy Fire**. I'm also writing an original virtual reality script for New Line and we also have a project at MGM. I don't know which will happen first. I do love **Unholy Fire** but I also love this ghost story at MGM which is by a young writer named Lucky Gold. He's really good and I hope his name brings us both luck and gold."

Many directors are unhappy with the Horror association. Not Romero. He's quite happy with the niche he is managed to carve out for himself. He said, "I'm lucky that I can show up somewhere and get somebody to give me a job. I always say if there was a two-dollar betting window, that's where I'd hang out. I wouldn't bet \$17 million on anything. I'd love to try some other stuff but I'd have to get in a position where I'm not worried about fees and all that. I don't have anything in my drawer that's a passion apart from **Tarzan**. It's the only thing I've ever wanted to do in my entire life."

Is there a possibility of another King/Romero collaboration in the future? "I always say our names come up in the same offices all the time. So we probably will. We don't have any plans right now. But we'll get together on something I hope."

IF I HAD A HAMMER

Shivers feature by Alan Jones

HERE they explain their commitment to the continuing success of a British institution and their plans for rebuilding the most famous House of Horor in the world

Roy Skeggs joined Hammer in 1963 as a production accountant after working in the film industry since 1956 at National Studios. He then became Company Accountant and Secretary, supervised forty Hammer Horrors during the Sixties' Golden Era and produced ten including *Frankenstein and the Monster from Hell* (1973) and *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* (1973). Skeggs produced the last Hammer film to date, *To the Devil - A Daughter* (1976), and the company's final venture, *The Hammer House of Horror* TV series co-produced by ITC in 1980. Skeggs acquired the Hammer company in 1985 after it went into official receivership.

Lauren Shuler-Donner debuted as a film producer with **My Mom** (1983) after building up extensive TV and associate producing credits. Her next movie was **Ladyhysteria**, where she met and later married director Richard Donner. She also produced **Pretty in Pink**, **Three Fugitives** and two of this year's biggest box office hits, **Dave** and **Free Willy**. Richard Donner also directed **The Omen**, **Superman** and **Radio Flyer**. The Donners' obligations to Hammer mean they've had to give up developing the movie of Anne Rice's **The Witching Hour**.

Stewers: How did the link-up with the Donners happen?

Roy Skeggs: I'd been working solidly on deals for remakes and new Hammer films over the past eight years but what clinched the largest part of the nineteen-film multi-million dollar package I've just announced was meeting Richard Donner and his wife Richard was very influenced by Hammer in his early career — so was Martin Scorsese, Joe Dante and Brian De Palma — and at one business meeting he said, 'Isn't it about time for some more Hammer-type Fantasy/Horror'.



Richard Donner was very influenced by Hammer in his early career.

Roy Skeggs is back. And Lauren Shuler-Donner has got him! These two producers, together with director Richard Donner, are the combined force behind the sudden and amazing resurgence of Hammer films.

Above: You won't see any Frankensteins in the new house of Hammer. Below: But you will see this remake



COLOR size 100, 1000

JAMES DONALDSON, ANDREW KEIR, BARBARA SHUFFLE, ROSEMARY COVEY

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ror again? Slasher movies are out. Audiences don't like them anymore." So we put a package together with Warner Bros who agreed to bankroll a series of Hammer productions over the next four years. Once the contracts were signed, the Donners went through the entire Hammer back catalogue and picked out twenty titles they felt lent themselves to being remade. I did the same. Then we compared both lists and picked out the cream.

Lauren Shuler-Donner: The Hammer back catalogue is just wonderful and packed with great thrillers. Their extensive library was the main reason we signed the deal in the first place.

There's a shortage of ideas in Hollywood at the moment yet here was a company with a wealth of stories ready for reinterpretation. The Hammer name is a recognizable brand name too, an identifiable trademark. It's a terrific deal for us all.

S: Why have you chosen *The Quatermass Experiment* as the first remake?

RS: We each thought Val Guest's classic movie was a good atmosphere piece for its day (1955) but the special effects were pretty awful. We figured with today's computer graphics it could be wonderful.

Allen: co-writer Dan O'Bannon is scripting it. We approached him because *Alien* was a slight steal on the concept anyway! *The Quatermass Experiment* is scheduled to begin shooting January 1994 on a \$50 million budget. Old Hammer movies never spent more than \$300,000. And that was for a big title! We intend to remake the entire Quatermass trilogy within the package and *Quatermass II* and *Quatermass and the Pit* will follow.

LSO: American audiences aren't so familiar with the Quatermass pictures. To begin with, they didn't even include the Professor's name in the retitle [The Creeping Unknown, *Enemy from Space*, *Five Million Years to Earth*]. The movies only had cult appeal initially too. If we do *The Quatermass Experiment* right, the whole world will embrace the character. He's an eminently franchiseable figure who can work for a new generation. *Quatermass and the Pit* is my favourite and when we come to remake that it will be set on the New York subways



"Today we can make a truly superb version of the Dennis Wheatley tale"

S: You've announced *The Devil Rides Out* remake also.

RS: It's a similar situation. The Terence Fisher 1968 original is a fabulous film but the special effects are lacking.

Today we can make a truly su-

perb version of the Dennis Wheatley tale using modern technology. It's my favourite Hammer film of all. I chose this one to remake and I'm determined to make sure this production will be shot in Eng-



Left: And you may see this Sangster slasher remake too; **Below:** Dracula Will Be Left Out In The Cold though

land. I totally disagree with the argument that those remakes represent sacrilege of a cinematic kind. It's live colorization. You can colour a black and white movie and get a whole new audience but still have the old classic. The same ethic applies to Hammer. I still own all the old Hammer movie rights. I always will and they will always be available. The remakes are for the modern cinema-going audience.

S: *Stolen Face* (1952) and *Taste of Fear* (1961) are another two planned remakes. **LSO:** Both thrillers could be updated into really classy movies on the scale of *Jagged Edge* and *Fatal Attraction*. *Stolen Face* is an intriguing concept and when we redo it, we'll have to decide from which angle to approach the story. Should it be about the tortured plastic surgeon and his need to replace the woman in his life with an exact double? Or should we focus on the remodelled woman, the way Terence Fisher did in the original? Those sort of decisions are why these new Hammer movies won't simply be straight remakes. It was the good story bones we looked for with regards our remake choices.

Taste of Fear breaths and turns all over the place before a great denouement. No one ever suspects who is lying to drive Susan Strasberg insane and that superior twist will work today.

S: Aside from the remakes, the Warner deal includes an ambitious roster of new projects. What are the ones you can talk about?

RS: There's *Hideous Whispers* based on a novel titled *The Hiss* which Richard is keen to direct. He says he's been looking for exactly this sort of horror story ever since his huge success with *The Omen* in 1975. Another story, *Psychic Detective*, is being developed at the moment. We're talking on writers pretty much daily and I seem to be going to Los Angeles every three weeks for production meetings.

S: Outside the Warner package you've done other independent deals. What are

Right: The last Hammer Horror made to date;
Below: The new Quatermass and the Pit will be relocated to the New York subway

they?

RS: There's *The House on the Strand* by Daphne Du Maurier [of *Rebecca* and *The Birds* fame] I personally love the book and it's her last unsold bestseller. I've set this up with Grundy International to be shot in Tasmania in Spring 1994 as a \$15 million co-production with the Australian Government. There's *The Day the Earth Caught Fire* which wasn't a Hammer film but I picked up the rights from Val Guest who directed the Sci-Fi original in 1961. That's a 20th Century Fox co-production with Barry Harte signed to direct. Then there's *Four-Sided Triangle* written by Hammer stalwart Chris [Demons of the Mind] Wicking. The script is not yet up to standard but we will be making it as a low budgeter. John Hough's *Children of the Wolf* is another reasonably low budget thriller which will be made through the Movie Acquisitions company starring Lesley-Anne Down. And the long-postponed *Vlad the Impaler* will finally be made too with the participation of Rank Film.

S: You mention John Hough who directed *Twins of Evil* for Hammer in 1972. Does this mean you will be more than happy to employ veteran Hammer directors, stars and technicians again?

RS: It depends. The American end will make their own decisions but I would love to use all the established Hammer people if we can find them. There's still a few around and some have already been in touch. There will always be cameo roles for Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee if they want them. I want links between the past and the future to ensure every movie will be an authentic Hammer film. By the same token, I don't see the point of doing any *Dracula* or *Frankenstein* remakes considering the Coppola and Kenneth Branagh big budget competition. I know it never stopped Hammer before but seven *Dracula* movies and five featuring *Frankenstein* are more than enough. They are the old Hammer. We must now start thinking in terms of the new Hammer



Hammer is back on the map again in a big way

S: You're doing a TV series as part of the Warner deal too.

RS: *The Haunted House of Hammer* will be like *The Twilight Zone*. The deal is for 44 one-hour episodes. 22 will be shot in Britain next Spring, the remainder in America. They feature strange ghost stories from classic writers to more modern ones. We sifted through 700 short stories before making our

final choices. Richard will direct several and we've also approached Joe Dante and Brian De Palma. Before that, Channel 4 will air a 13 part series of half-hour programmes narrated by Oliver [Curse of the Werewolf] Reed titled *The World of Hammer* featuring clips from the entire Hammer library. It's a bit like *That's Carry On*.

S: We wish the company and

your exciting plans every success. But why do you think the Hammer name endured to still represent the benchmark of British Horror forty years on?

RS: It's so difficult to say. I always used to say Hammer was Walt Disney with a bit of blood. I think it was down to the sincerity of the productions and the team of people who made them and worked so well together. No one man was entirely responsible. It was a very serious business. You can't underestimate the Cushing and Lee factor either. Both were highly professional and committed actors. After forty years all the Hammer movies are probably better films now than when they were made. Every time one plays on TV the audiences are huge because they had major stars and great production values. Every penny was on the screen and that's still the way I intend to work. Since the news of our revival, we've been inundated with letters and calls from fan clubs, well-wishers, technicians, actors and actresses. The response has been so gratifying. Hammer is back on the map again in a big way and I'm positive the name will endure forever.



NECRONOMICON

Shivers feature by Simon Bacal

You read about *The Drowned* last issue. Now the **Necronomicon** unfolds a further two tales of terror to complete Brian Yuzna's study in Lovecraftian fright.

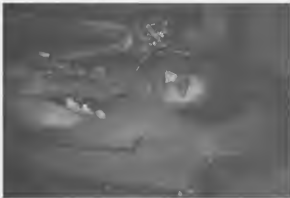
THE COLD shows what happens to music student Emily (Beas Meyer), on the run from her abusive stepfather, when she rents a room owned by a mysterious Doctor (David Warner) and his longtime companion Lena (Milla Perlens). Falling in love with the Doctor, she soon discovers to her horror that he's achieved immortality by feeding off human spinal fluid. Without the fluid, the good Doctor melts - a climactic effects scene achieved by aiming heat guns at Screaming Mad George's full-size Warner puppet.

"Thank God, this film doesn't have much technical dialogue," mused Warner. "Usually when that happens, I find myself under a considerable amount of pressure. At the end of the day, when you're due to climb in your car and drive home, the special effects crew went you to go through four pages of complicated chemical formulae. Although the physical stuff is fine, a complex script can be tough especially at the end of a



Above: Victim of *The Cold*
Below: David Warner as mad
Dr Madden in *The Cold*

He's achieved immortality
by feeding off human spinal fluid



hard day's shooting. On this project, instead of dealing with dozens of scientific terms, I'm playing a character who, rather than just villainous, is a sympathetic person with love interests."

Summer Vacation 1999 helmer Shu Kaneko is the Japanese director breathing life into *The Cold*. Through an interpreter he explained, "I originally thought I had a three week shooting schedule and the storyboards were designed accordingly. Having it cut to eight days has put the pressure on. I would love to start shooting from the beginning again and use more camera angles and additional exterior shots."

While mad doctors and blood-spattered laboratories are the focus of *The Cold*, a subterranean underworld is the setting for the final tale *Whispers*. Don Calfa, Judith Drake, Signey Coleman and Obba Babatundé star in this story about murderous aliens directed by Brian

Caught in an Alien Hell full of Whispers

Yuzna. He said, "This is the last episode and it also needs to be the film's third act. I didn't want to have this slow set up and punchline formula which must get boring for audiences in completion movies. *Necronomicon* is constructed so the first segment poses a question, the second one lets us cruise for a while and the third tale hits you with 'bang, bang' action. While I want *Whispers* to keep the audience awake, I want it to focus on the fear of finding yourself finite in an infinite world."

He continued, "I'm shooting for the notion that everything we've created — culture, religion, Heaven, Hell, good, bad, philosophy — is nothing more than shadowplay we use to entertain ourselves within the framework of a cruel, uninterested and impersonal universe. That's a very scary feeling we've all felt and a terrible experience which is hard to dramatize."

Trying to put this across is Don Calla who plays Mr. Benedict, the word caretaker of a building where strange things happen in the basement. Calla noted, "This guy and his blind wife are totally schizo. Their home looks ordinary but it hides the most horrific secrets. He's uncovered an alien race in the depths of the cellar but as he's the human Judas Goat himself, they let him live so he can provide them with human victims. Mrs. Benedict turns out to be half human/half alien into removing fetuses from pregnant girls and sucking the marrow from their bones. (Todd Masters designed a creature to do just that!) There's not much difference between a human embryo and a pig embryo. So Benedict is only a guy who's stepping back from normal parameters, into an alien force way beyond our comprehension, and saying 'What's so spooky?' It's all meet."

Regardless of Benedict's unsavoury pastime, Calla perceives his character as someone who genuinely possesses his own set of morals. He added, "I cut out all the curse words, saying heck instead of hell, Judas Priest instead of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, being schizo,



Pure Lovecraftian Horror is also about paralysis and amputation

when he's not telling the truth, he doesn't lie. He's completely absorbed in what he believes is his own truth."

On the day I visited the set, Yuzna had policewoman Coleman rolling in a pit filled with severed human limbs, sur-

rounded by strange whispers which eventually send her insane. Yuzna continued, "I came up with this idea of her falling into the womb of this big creature which lives underneath the Earth to whom human sacrifices are made. She also thinks she

can handle her ordeal until, on the verge of a miscarriage, she realizes she's dealing with another life form which will take her consciousness and make it part of itself. But she'll be constantly aware of it which, in addition to being pure Lovecraftian Horror, is about paralysis and amputation. After all, if you're paralysed, it's extremely horrific to be totally aware of being moved about."



Brynn Yuzna has a cameo in *Whispers* as a cab driver

BEDLAM



Shivers set report by Alan Jones

What horrifying experiments, murderous deeds and gory goings-on are taking place behind the locked doors of a sinister sanitarium in North London? According to director Vadim Jean, "It's all sheer **Bedlam...**"



BEDLAM is a \$3 million psychological Horror film based on the novel by Henry Adam Knight, author of *Comosaur*, starring an all-British cast including *Glimmer* villain Craig Fairbrass, *Young American* heavy Keith Allen and *Passenger 57* heroine Elizabeth Hurley. Also tucked away among the credits are soap stars Anita Dobson, ex-*EastEnders*, and Josse Buisson, late of *Eldorado*.

Allen plays Gilmour, a notorious serial killer nicknamed the 'Bone Man', who is transferred from prison to The Institute, a weird medical establishment at Harrow-on-the-Hill. There he's treated with a revolutionary new mind-altering drug to negate the impulses that drive him to commit gruesome acts of murder. Unfortunately, not only does the drug have the reverse effect, it also has a terrifying side-effect; it links Gilmour's confused brain signals with psychiatrist Hurley's thought patterns. So when she wishes her neighbour harm after being kept awake by loud music, Gilmour comes out her deadly desire born from rage. And when she sleeps, Gilmour turns her pleasant dreams into grim nightmares. Fairbrass is the veteran policeman responsible for putting Gilmour behind bars seven years earlier, at tragic personal cost, who teams up with Hurley to prevent the warped genius embarking on an unstoppable killing spree.

Bedlam began its six week shoot in and around London on July 12th, 1993, reuniting producer Paul Brooks with Vadim Jean who previously worked together on *Leon the Pig Farmer*. Brooks set up Metrodome Films, the private-investment backed production company behind *Bedlam*, following the critical, box-office and worldwide Festival success of *Leon* which Jean co-directed with Gary Sinyor. Originally *Bedlam* was to have marked the feature film debut of Rob Walker, writer of the screenplay. But 'creative differences' between the director of television's *Ruth Rendell Mysteries* and Brooks meant the producer needed an urgent replacement. "And as I'd literally been hanging around Metrodome for nine

Top: Annette Bening is the terrifying Nurse Wrenkin;
Right: Director Vadim Jean



months writing two scripts Paul had commissioned (*Reeders Wives* and *The Line*), he asked me to step in," said the 27-year-old Jean, whose mother loved French director Roger Vadim's movies so much she gave her son his surname as a Christian name. He continued, "One day Paul said, 'How do you fancy directing a horror film?' So I read the *Bedlam* script and thought it was a bit different from a Jewish comedy! What I liked about it the most was how commercial it

An opportunity to fill the screen with guns, action and blood is really very rare.

was. We don't make enough out-and-out entertainment in Britain. An opportunity to fill the screen with guns, action and blood is really very rare. So I grabbed the chance. Also *Bedlam* was a total departure from *Leon*. I thought it would be a good idea not to have people make direct comparisons between my first two movies. They were at oppo-

site ends of the entertainment spectrum and that was great."

While *Leon the Pig Farmer* was made on a minuscule amount of money with the cast and crew on deferred payments, Jean said *Bedlam*'s \$3 million budget didn't really feel like a major step up the ladder. "Even though *Leon* was made for next to nothing, the constraints were

Top left: Anita Dobson is the *Neighbour from Hell*; Right: Keith Allen is serial killer *Merc Gilmour*; Bottom left: Jesse Birdsall under heavy make-up with stuntman Glen Marks; Right: Keith Allen vs Craig Fairbrass, killer against cop

the same. Nor is anyone on a massive salary here. The actors are working for a tiny percent of what they could get because they want to be involved in the sort of movie the British Film In-



dusty should be making more of \$3 million is still a tight budget especially when you are trying to create a strong visual style, move the camera constantly, cross-cut sequences and be more elaborate than the lighting point of view. Everytime an actor hits their mark, they must be it beautifully. That's time and money consuming. **Leon** was mainly about performance and comedy timing. In sharp contrast, **Bedlam's** challenges are all technical and that represents an altogether different set of pressures on me."

Once Jean accepted the **Bedlam** assignment, the first thing he did was rewrite Rob Walker's script. "I made it more interior, more psychological. Walker's script was far more conventional in the classic Horror sense with spiders crawling out of skulls' eye sockets. I dispensed with stuff like the raving loofuses scene from the Knight novel too. The Horror is now more surgical with med doctors and hypodermic needles. Taking the story in this direction made it seem less predictable, enabling me to include more unusual shocks. It was a major revelation to learn most people get scared by needles on screen. So I've loaded **Bedlam** with needle close-ups 20 feet high and clinical pans into the hole at the sharp end. The first time we saw rushes, half the crew nearly fainted! Hmmm, I'm onto something here, I thought."

Jean needed that sort of audience feedback too. He made a very startling admission to *Shivers* while waiting for a climactic light scene to be choreographed in the laundry basement of the deserted asylum located in Freet Barnet. "I've never seen a Horror film! I don't like them. I felt certain they wouldn't work on me. Just prior to starting **Bedlam**, I watched *The Hidden and Hellraiser III* as reference. That's all! Oh, is *Alien* a Horror film? That was good! Because some of the crew are Horror buffs [like the Image Animation team who provide some explosive effects for **Bedlam**], if they recognize something they've seen before in the script, they tell me and I take it out in a way. I'm convinced having no prior genre knowledge is for the best as I'm bringing a fresh and inexperienced eye to the project. I don't think I'll miss it up and disap-



"I've never seen a horror film! I don't like them"

point the fans. If anything I'm creating a new genre, the 'thriller' — half thriller, half Horror."

Nor is Jean relying on stendard prosthetics, unusual make-ups or special effects to carry the shock load. The director, whose first movie job was as a runner on Mike Figgis's *Stormy Monday*, added, "In this post-Jurassic Park era, the credibility gap has widened enormously and such effects are an impossible act to follow. Audiences will expect the same high calibre effects from now on. They don't even consider budgetary constraints and nor should they. I decided not to even bother trying to compete. The blood is spied on in **Bedlam** and there's some disappearing within the camera stuff. That's it. What frightens people is what their imaginations create rather than what you show. So I decided to suggest more than show."

Suggestion and atmosphere are the two main qualities Jean has strived for throughout the making of **Bedlam**. He remarked, "The movie is stylized

in a way that should feel out of time, not necessarily set in the present day. Shooting inside this dilapidated mental hospital has been wonderful for atmosphere purposes. The radical door, old-fashioned Italianate architecture and dark corners of this creepy environment is perfect for the story and very cinematic. Because we couldn't afford to rent studio space at the cost of £1400 a day, it caused us to look around for an alternative venue. This place was ideal and only cost £200 a day which we paid directly to the Nephel Health Service."

Despite the vague futuristic accents in the story, Jean was rather taken aback by one crew member giving him a cutting from *The Independent* newspaper on the first day of shooting. He outlined, "It was a feature all about neuro-transmitters, the chemicals that define if you are a psychopath or not. Basically, if they're missing from the brain you're a psycho. Experiments are now in operation on neuro-transmitter replacement techniques. I was shocked at

Craig Fairbrass is veteran detective Terry Hamilton

how quickly the **Bedlam** story was reflecting real life."

If **Bedlam** is a major hit (rapid foreign pre-sales of the distribution rights already signal financial prosperity), Jean says a large part of the success will be down to actor Craig Fairbrass who plays Terry Hamilton, the cop with a mission. He continued, "Craig has an incredible presence and is one of the few British actors with an amazing physique. I can understand why very few British actors work out or pump iron. There aren't many opportunities in English movies to get physical. I mean, how many car chases do we film? But Craig is an actor in the American star mould. He's our Sylvester Stallone. To be honest, I've asked him to do nothing. And that's the hardest thing you can ask of an actor. If your face is 30 feet tall on a screen at the Odeon Leicester Square, nothing is what you must do because the slightest facial movement can register monumentally. I believe it's all in Craig's eyes and he's trusted my judgement." (**Bedlam** is the first movie in a three-picture deal Fairbrass has signed with Metrodome Films.)

Touted by producer Brooks as "Falling somewhere between *The Silence of the Lambs* and *Flatliners* with a nice line in black comedy", **Bedlam** will be released in Spring 1994 in Britain. Vidim Jean is clearly a little nervous over how it will eventually play to the voracious Horror movie contingent. He remarked, "At this point, halfway through production, I'm not certain if I've succeeded in making it scary or not. Ultimately I make movies to entertain. I don't care if you laugh, cry or jump, as long as you are entertained. Obviously I want people to leave **Bedlam** having moved their bottoms from the back of the seat to the front and with a full sack bag! I do know I have got some bits right. I got a report back the other day from our processing lab. It said, 'Technically the print is fine but I couldn't tell you how good it looks because I couldn't bring myself to watch those scenes you've filmed!' If the man who grades the print couldn't look, then there's hope for the entire movie."

VIDEO has been a freeing force for more than a decade of film fans. It has revolutionized habits, making movies accessible and collectable in unforeseen ways. No longer reliant on rep cinemas, butts country-wide have been able to fill in obscure viewing blanks. Many have built vast and wide-ranging personal archives and have become experts in the process.

Effectively demanding special editions for the British market, the Video Recordings Act has, until recently, cut against the availability of mummy titles here. Many pivotal pics are still only available through overseas mail-order, a complex and costly routine looked on equivocally by Customers. Other marginal rarities exist from the free-market days pre-VRA. Hence there is a pool of exciting hard-to-come-by titles that can only be seen by fans if contacts make copies from their own catalogue and pass them on. A technical rigidity, it is an aficionado's offence, deemed necessary by those unable to nab that missing Mario Bava any other way. Devotees of many genres have been allowed to develop their libraries unhampered. But as one Cardiff collector recently discovered, dare do it with Horror and prison may be the prize.

At the beginning of 1992, Liverpool Trading Standards sent out film lists from a PO Box in response to several of the entries in the 'Collector's Corner' of a well-known fanzine. 'Rob', a nurse and father advertising 750 'trash, gore and sleaze' titles 'for sale and swap', had sent his list by return. At breakfast on May 6th, 1992, Cardiff Trading Standards raided his flat, seizing every tape in the place — along with VHS and Betamax video recorders, television, typewriter, correspondence and family photos. One of a dozen simultaneous swoops, officials were quick to play up the covertness and the co-ordination of their action to the press. Fantasizing themselves as deep-cover agents penetrating a ring of perverts, Trading Standards won massive media attention. Their headline-grabbing statements were ludicrous, irrelevant and damningly prejudicial.

Though Liverpool had approached Rob with swaps in

HELL SCREEN

Shivers opinion by David Prothero

Tape Measures

mind, he was now a trader, the vital 'Cardiff Connector' in 'a very lucrative business', a 'major nationwide ring dealing in horrific video nashes and porn'. Pursuing possible breaches of the VRA (despite fanzine-speak, basically a licensing law, not a law directly judgemental of content) officials nevertheless made much of the 'disgusting' titles on offer. Reporters lusted over **The Blood-Spattered Bride** ('it leaves little to the imagination'), an officer held up **The Texas Chainsaw Massacre** grinfaced, as **Carnival of Souls** lay quietly in front, the investigation's head grided himself and wondered sadly what kind of people could enjoy this stuff. Suddenly somehow the fact that Rob's bedroom was 'decked out like a shrine to horror' was implicating. While the offending **Nightbreed** poster was left on the wall, film mags and a press pack for **Witchfinder General** were also removed from the col-

lector's home. Massrepresentation continued the next month when Trading Standards trumpeted that the seized **Man Behind the Sun** was a 'snuff movie', and that Pasolini's superb **Salo** showed women eating real faeces.

Terrifying inaction followed. Initial charges were not laid until an agonizing six months after the Mary offensive, legal finessing and court adjournments ended in the matter reaching trial April 5th, 1993. Nineteen sample titles had been chosen for prosecution, the inclusion of four pornos and the scandalous **Guinea Pig** a ruse to undermine Rob's collector's credentials. It's hard enough to explain the fan urge to the uninformed, let alone discuss theories of confrontational cinema and the bodily-based connections between Horror and pornography. True enough, Rob had committed crimes under the VRA. He had no alternative but to plead

guilty. But his library charred gone film from the early days and the circuit he operated on consisted of like zealots. Trading Standards however painted a picture of a trader interested only in the most inflammatory images, selling blindly through the post. The sentence matched this misinformation. Rob was fined £1500, with £500 costs, the confiscation of VCRs and TV and the phantasmic destruction of his entire archive — over 1900 titles in total.

Worse was yet to come. Urged on by Trading Standards, in Autumn 1992 a Priority Policing Team began investigations under the Obscene Publications Act, the result a far more serious action that would enhance the myth of Rob as a muck merchant. Seven sample charges were brought, citing four pornos, **Nightmares in a Damaged Brain** and both **Nekromantik** movies. Ready to protest his innocence but aware that a failed 'Not Guilty' plea might result in six months jail, Rob took stock and decided to plead 'Guilty'. Grasping the truth of the case, a probation report recommended only a further fine. But Judge Tom Growther had other ideas. On Friday August 13th, 1993, declaring that 'desires in anti-social pornography and Horror had to be sent the message that it was not acceptable', he jailed Rob for an outrageous three months. Rob of course automatically lost his job. Their hype approved, Trading Standards gloated to reporters outside the court.

It is no longer true that Horror is reviled academically. It is in fact rather a sexy subject. But its poor profile elsewhere still enables intolerant and ulterior interests to accuse as they wish. At a time of government cutbacks, Trading Standards gained dynamic national coverage through genre scapegoating. Anti-Europeans got a useful boost too, news maps charting the invasion of fifth from abroad coming days before renewed attacks on Maastricht, warning against the collapse of borders. And all for the price of one man's injustice. In case you missed it Horror fans, it was Rob who was charged with corruption. You have been warned!

Left: Jorg Buttgerath's ever-controversial shocker

'Decked out like a shrine to Horror'



CTHULHU MANSION

Director Juan Piquero Simon
Starring Frank Finlay, Marcia Layton, Brad Fisher
First Independent Rental

When Frank Finlay, playing mystical magician Chandu, first intones the words "We are now on a long journey, a journey of no return," you can be forgiven for thinking he's talking about his career. All evidence here certainly points to it.

Following a botched drug deal at the fairground — the only fun-fair to come complete with earnest guards! — Hawk (Fisher) and his gang kidnap Chandu and hold him hostage in his suitably eerie mansion. Chandu, whose wife and previous assistant literally disappeared in a puff of smoke (and a fair amount of flame), is none too happy with their refusal to leave and so conjures numerous badly made-up demons. Needless to say, the proverbial 'All Hell breaks loose'.

Inspired by the works of H P Lovecraft, the quality of acting is more reminiscent of H R Puffinbluff. What can you expect from the director of *Supersonic Man* and *The Rift* who ensures the majority of the movie's running time is taken up by aimlessly meandering to a climax that's hardly worth the wait? While an icebox devil plumbs the depths of cheap FX, and a loves-me-loves-me-not variation with houseplants is

VIDEODROME

Shivers reviews by Bob McCabe



Above: Frank Finlay is Chandu in *Cthulhu Mansion*;
Below: Blood bath from the same movie

emotionally harrowing in all the worst ways, you can't help feeling some sympathy for Finlay. At least he has the decency to look embarrassed throughout

LEPRECHAUN

Director Mark Jones
Starring Warwick Davis, Jennifer Aniston, Ken Olin, Mark Holton
Reflective Rental

Given this movie's total reliance on desperately familiar stock types — handyman hunk,

Nineties' Woman with a good scream, precocious brat, mentally deficient sidekick — there's almost a certain amount of pleasure to be had from sitting back and predicting when the clichés will occur. Just when will the Macguffin fall from the ceiling and make everyone jump? What will the scurrying in the corner turn out to be — a rat or cat? (Rat) In fact the only thing

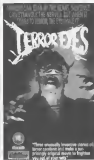
even vaguely approaching an original idea is the titular villain, possibly *Kindred*'s first Gaelic midget monster.

The Leprechaun has a pot of gold to protect and plans to off anyone who tries to take it away from him. Shame then about poor Ozze (Holton). He swallowed one of the cones and our green-fingered friend is not about to wait until it passes naturally. The character may be a different model but the engine's most definitely the same, gruesome killings accompanied by amusing one-liners (which they ain't). Davis struggles gamely though and there are a few entertaining moments including a severed hand opening the door to rejoin its arm, and my particular favourite of the little feller's demonstrative nursery rhymes, "This old Lep, he played one. He played pogo on my lung!" Bouncy stuff.

TERROR EYES

Director Eric Farkenton
Starring Vivian Schilling, Daniel Roebuck
VHS Rental

Hollywood writers strike. No more movies, no more Horror. What's the Devil to do? boasts the opening of this extremely cheap/filmed-on-low-grade-video movie. Simple, three tales of terror, supposedly seen through the eyes of an aspiring screenwriter struggling to script the ultimate Horror movie. Well, that's the idea anyway even if it only lasts through the first story. After that the wrap-around moves to a campfire setting interrupted by a bizarre demon attack. Who knows why? The three segments vary from



the OK (a couple given the Book of Life which details their impending demise) to the dull (a gambler keeps reliving a murder) to the best of the bunch (about a female chess champ, abducted by a computer games manufacturer she has publicly denied for titles like 'Wife Beater', forced to fight for her life in a very real, very deadly video game).

Obviously intended as a piece of self-promotion for writer/star Schilling and writer/director Parkins, while the fix may be dodgy at times, and if the budget seems to have only stretched to borrowing a friend's front room, **Terror Eyes** is not without imagination especially in the engaging final episode.

THE WARNING

Director: Greydon Clark
Starring Jack Palance, Martin Landau, Cameron Mitchell
VPCO. Soli-Thru.

A down-market Predator-esque number with an unusually impressive cast and a special mention for the heroine with the appropriate name of Tarah Nutt: 'If you go down to the lake today, you're sure of a big surprise', eccentric hunter Palance warns the usual bunch of expendable teens. There are no bears in sight but plenty of alien parasites tending to resemble carnivorous flying fried eggs. Pretty soon the locals are being picked off one by one and it's up to Palance and shell-shocked Vietnam veteran Landau to hunt the space hunters.

An engaging enough Sol-Fi horror, most notable for a distinctly pre-Oscar Palance and especially Landau's high camp performance, both a career low-

point and a fine slice of ham. The monster fix are enjoyably gruesome and watch out for Larry Storch, once of TV's *F Troop*, now in charge of a scout troupe and, needless to say, an early victim.



BRAIN FIX

Director: Scott Wallace with Jim Aron
Starring Charles Copley, Jack Savage, Jim Patraček
VPCO. Soli-Thru.

The Tangler lives in a totally uninspired cheapie. Professor Fued (Savage) has developed a revolutionary, but highly secretive, means of curing acute schizophrenia. When his son Jeff (Copley) takes a summer job at the clinic, it soon becomes clear that the good doctor's methods involve placing a nasty creature, called a Parasitas, into the back of the neck. And snooping Jeff is next in line for the special operation.

This is a lame nasty veering between clinical Horror and inept humour with a dose of soft porn titillation chuckered in to cover all bases. There are some suitably grisly operation scenes, a loosey shock ending and very little else to recommend it. Relatively vile.

NEWS

Highlight of the month has got to be Joe Dante's brilliant **Mel-mee** showcasing the fabulous **Mint**. Vampires crop up in **Bloodstone: Subspecies II** (Full Moon Entertainment) and **Children of the Night** (Columbia TriStar) with Karen Black and Ami Dolenz. Monique Mokey's daughter also stars in **Witchboard: The Return** (Medusa). Mel Harris lights off



David Keith, the Relative from Hell, in **Desperate Motive** (Reflective) while fellow thirty-something Timothy Busfield gets involved in a murder in **Fade to Black** (CIC). Proto-aerial killer Charlie Starweather gets another filmic outing with Tim Roth now prowling the Badlands in **Murder in the Heartland** (High Fliers). Evil magicians and Merlin's sword appear on **October 32nd** (Columbia TriStar). The **Allen** trilogy gets the deluxe box set treatment complete with booklet.

Prepare yourself for **Laprechaun 2** by seeing the original

'Making of' docu and a facehugger tenderly wrapped around the lot. A snip at 69.99 (Fox). Time-travelling Nazis appear in **The Philadelphia Experiment 2** (Polygram). Ticks are expected from Medusa in the New Year after its LFF showcase. Arnold's lamentable **Last Action Hero** (20/20) and the not so **Super Mario Bros** (Entertainment) make it in time for desperate Christmas stocking fillers: the **Ghost** gift set (CIC) comes complete with a soundtrack to play model to. **Men Bites Dog** offers another perfect gift idea, a deluxe box set including an early short by the directing team. **The Lost World** and **The Return of the Lost World**, two TV movies on one tape, proudly boasts the tag line 'Jurassic Adventures'. Redemption will be releasing the never-before-seen Mario Bava cut of **Baron Blood** soon. A major find for Italian Horror fans. And if you missed the brilliant **Wild Paine** on BBC TV, buy them now!



UPDATE

In *Shivers* 8 somebody asked why Sam Raimi had been cut from *Maniac Cop 2*. I said he hadn't been for the simple reason that I saw the film at the Shock Around the Clock Horror-fest in 1990 and remembered Sam playing a TV reporter. This produced a fax from none other than the film's director, William Lustig, who revealed, "The credits for *Maniac Cop 2* were prepared before I finished cutting the picture. Sam was cut for 'pacing' purposes (although his scene remains in the longer US and Japanese TV versions.) I was cut from *Army of Darkness* for the same reason. I've enjoyed appearing in Sam's pictures as well as having him in mine. Sam is a good friend so cutting his scene wasn't easy. But hey — that's show biz!"

Nobody responded to my plea for details of more make-up schools in the UK. But I've found another one. Brushstroke offers a full-time (Monday to Friday, 10.30am to 3.30pm), four week course that includes Special Effects (Accidents and Horror) along with the basic art of making people look better than they do in real life. Write to Brushstroke at Shepperton Studios, Studios Road, Middlesex TW17 0GD or telephone (0832) 862181.

Also in *Shivers* 8 I listed Forrest J Ackerman's screen appearances. Tony Meadows of Wigan, Lancs, sent in another batch. I can confirm that Tony was also in *The Wizard of Speed and Time* (1968), *Transylvania Twist* (1990) and *Nudist Colony of the Dead* (1991). Tony says (but I can't guarantee) he's in *The Winners' Circle* (1948), *King Kong* (1976), *Into the Night* (1985), *Amazon Women on the Moon* (1987), *My Mom's a Werewolf* (1989) and *The Laughing Dead* (1990). He may also be in *Curse of the Queenwolf*, *Attack of the B-Movie Monsters*, *The Demon Within*, *Tower of Terror* and *The Lucifer Chest*, but I can't trace credits for these films. Anyone else know for sure?

SP Serrano, producer/director/writer/star of the unseen *The Laughing Dead*, mentioned above and in *Shivers* 8, has turned up again, this time as the co-screenwriter of *Burial of the*

INQUISITION

Shivers Q&A by David McGillivray



Rita: Is a Roger Corman production starring Adrienne Barbeau, which has just finished shooting.

Im doing an article in my school magazine about Horror film festivals and need pro-

chures. Can you give me addresses of festivals throughout the world?

Kris,
Aberdeen, Scotland.

Right now there are seven ma-

There are also other proposals for new episodes for both series of *Alien* and *Predator*



for festivals of Fantasy films. Here they are in chronological order. The Oporto Festival of Fantasy takes place in February. (Writ to Mario Dominicy, Rua Diogo Brandao 7, 4000 Oporto, Portugal). The International Festival of Fantasy and Science Fiction Films is in Brussels in March (Guy Delmoge, 144 Avenue de la Reine, 1210 Brussels, Belgium). Editor Alan Jones's favourite Fantasy festival, Dylan Dog, is in Milan in May/June (Sergio Bonelli, Editore, Via M. Buonarroti 38, 20145 Milan, Italy). The Fantasporto is in Rome in June/July (Adriano Pintaldi, Via Boncompagni 61, 00187 Rome, Italy). The Fantasy Film Festival travels to Munich, Hamburg, Cologne, Berlin and Frankfurt between July and September (Rosebud Entertainment, Hans Sachs-strasse 22, 80469 Munich, Germany). The Stigias Festival Internacional de Cinema Fantastico is in October (Xavier Catala, Diputacio 279, Barcelona 08007, Spain). The International Festival of Fantasy Films is in Montreal in October/November (The Director, Office 717, 1117 Rue Sainte Catherine Ouest, Montreal, Quebec H3B 1H9, Canada). And read on!

Will there be another Horror film festival in the UK?

Dan Palmer,
Bournemouth, Dorset.

The UK has never managed to get together a Fantasy Festival to match those listed above. The best we've come up with are weekends of movies. Two such bashes are still afloat. The Festival of Fantastic Films takes place in Manchester in October. It features mainly vintage Sci-Fi with the occasional premiere thrown in. Minor genre celebs attend. Details from Gél Lane-Young, 33 Barmington Road, Altrincham, Cheshire WA14 1HZ. Very near you, Dan, is Harbour Frights, an April event held in Britain's last gas-ill cinema, the Rex, in Wareham, Dorset. Organizer David Hughes tells me that they usually screen up to ten Fantasy films, half of which are British premieres. I may well accept his invitation to the next event. If you want to be there

Left: Another Forry Ackerman appearance discovered!

too write to Nick Gillott, 62 York Road, Broadstone, Poole, Dorset BH18 8EU (Ed note: Shock Around The Clock fans should expect a major announcement soon about an all new, bigger than ever, four day event. Watch this space)

Does Fox plan to make another *Predator* film?

Craig McElroy,
Tameside, Manchester.

Fox producer Larry Gordon is at the moment sitting on a screenplay by Pete Bnggs, which pits Alien against Predator. There are also other proposals for new episodes for both series, but nothing is likely to go into production before 1995 despite the fact Bnggs is currently working on a new draft of his script titled *The Hunt*. Pete would also like to scotch the rumour that his script hasn't been made yet because of too many producers being involved — three each on both sides. "Nothing could be further from the truth,"

he told me. "Plans to make the film are well underway."

Does Doug 'Pinhead' Bradley have a fan club?

Andrew Ilman,
Holywell, Chwyd.

What's happened to *Heilraiser* magazine? I haven't seen an issue for more than a year

Brian James,
Stockton-on-Tees,
Cleveland.

Despite his celebrity status, Doug doesn't have a fan club. But Clive Barker does. Write to Deborah Gordon, 96 Summer Street, Medford, Massachusetts 02155-4434, USA. Both guys are involved in *Heilraiser 4 - The Blood Line*, set to start shooting in January. Alas, the *Heilraiser* magazine is no more. Editor Jon Gregory tells me he had to cease publication when his printing company went out of business.

A new *Predator* movie is on the cards



SPECIAL SCREENING

Calling all Italian movie buffs, Papham fans, Cult Movie lovers and anyone prepared to scream...with hysterical laughter.

Shivers and Metro Tartan Pictures are giving 200 readers the exclusive chance to preview the new Australian movie everyone will soon be talking about. *Hercules Returns* doesn't open until April, 1994, but you can see it in comfort, midday on Saturday, January 29th, at a luxury venue in the heart of London's glittering West End.

Shivers has already mentioned this hilarious revamp of Giorgio Capriani's *Hercules, Samson, Maciste and Ursus* are inviolable by Double Take, the Melbourne-based comedy duo Des Mangan and Sally Petence. What they've done is revoice the 1964 sand and sandal smiker *is What's Up Tiger Lily* with a newly shot framing device by debut director David Parker.

Razorbak's David Angus plays Brad Molten who rents a rundown flea-pit to show his favourite old movies. For the gals opening he decides to unspool the final film that played in the cinema before it closed down. But at the last moment it's discovered the print has arrived in its original Italian language version without subtitles. With the celebrity audience already seated, there's nothing else they can do but fake the voiceover translation and improvise a story. What follows is guaranteed to have you rolling in the aisles helpless with laughter.

SEE *Hercules* sing 'The Great Pretender' in the Pink Parthenon disco.

SEE *Ursus*, the drunken Scottish bouncer, fight the gay Machismo.

SEE *Samson* shorn of his hair at the Delish Unisex Salon.

SEE the lovely *Lidia* torn between two musclebound lovers.

There's no questions to answer. Just send in your name and address on the back of a postcard or envelope marked **HERCULES**. If you are one of the first hundred received you'll be sent a free pair of tickets for this brilliant movie. (Please don't enter if you are under 15 years of age.)

As this premiere screening is for *Shivers* readers, and staff, only, a buffet and drinks will be provided to ensure a good time will be had by all. Plus there'll be chances to win tie-in T-shirts and other goodies. So come prepared for a party and you won't be disappointed.

Send to: **Shivers Screening (HERCULES),**
PO Box 371, LONDON SW14 6JL, UK

NEXT ISSUE Published 14th February 1994
On the set of Michels Soavi's anarchic zombie fantasy *Dellamorte Dellamore*... An exclusive interview with director Peter Jackson on his change-of-pace 'True Crime' story *Heavenly Creatures*... In *Space, No One Can Hear You Scream Again* — Brad Dourif confronts the mecha-alien star of *Death Machine*... The Silver Ball really does return this time as we go behind the scenes of *Phantasm III*... Kim Newman was on the Jury at the Sitges Fantasy Festival and files his report...and Continental Beauties galore in a European Horror starlets special.

FILM REVIEW

UK	Full Budget	\$27	Save \$8.40	\$53	Save \$13.80	\$79	Save \$22.20
	Budget	\$19	Save \$2.80	\$36	Save \$8.20	\$51	Save \$13.80
USA & CANADA	Full Budget	\$85	Save \$16.20	\$125	Save \$25.40	\$180	Save \$45.80
	Budget	\$44	Save \$2.40	\$84	Save \$12.80	\$120	Save \$22.20
Europe (except and include the above Eastern European and Balkan)	Full Budget	\$30	\$25	\$59	\$11.00	\$87	\$18.00
	Budget	\$20	\$36	\$39	\$7.10	\$56	\$12.00

[illegible]

FLM ACTION has for over forty years kept people informed about news and events in the film world.

As the magisterial critic begins, there are reviews of the current movies. Also featured are interviews with the stars, with fascinating bits about their back grounds. There is news of the latest events, with on-the-spot reporting from events like the Cannes Film Festival and the Oscar Award Ceremony. All the films released or video are listed, plus movie guides reviews. Your movie questions are answered in "Film Fix".

Among the Film Review Specialists are the Film Review Yearbook and the Summer Movie Guide.

Most back issues costs \$1.00 (\$3.00 and \$5.00) plus postage and packing (see info form).

STARDURST

UK	Full Budget	E36	Saves £4.40	E68	Saves £12.80	E97	Saves £24.20
		E24		E45		E64	
USA & CANADA	Full Budget	E24	Saves £2.20	E45	Saves £7.80	E64	Saves £15.20
US & Canada Advertisements	Full Budget	E53	Saves £6.40	E70	Saves £27.40	E98	Saves £36.40
Europe & Advertisements	Full Budget	E37	Saves £3.40	E74	Saves £14.60	E108	Saves £26.20
Europe & Advertisements	Full Budget	E29	Saves £3.60	E51	Saves £7.50	E78	Saves £16.80

all springs based in Pennsylvania are shown. The springs are the largest.

STARSLUG is Britain's premier Science Fiction Magazine. Since 1978 Starburst has been giving the latest news, insights and movie previews. There are in-depth interviews with stars, as well as writer, director and technical people who make Science Fiction a reality on large and small screens.

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